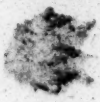
Archbiſhop *LEIGHTON'S*

SERMONS.



SERMONS

Preached by

Dr. *Robert Leighton*

Late Archbiſhop of

GLASGOW.

PUBLISHED,

At the deſire of his Friends, after his Death, from his Papers written with his own hand.

He was a burning and a ſhining Light, and ye were willing for a Seaſon to rejoyce in his Light, St. Joh. 5. 35.

He being dead, yet ſpeaketh, Heb. 11. 4.

The Second Edition.

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Margaret Dunmore 1697

TO THE PIOUS and DEVOUT READER.

THE Diſcourſes here publiſhed, are but a ſmall taſte of a great many more that were written by the ſame moſt Reverend Author. A Judgment will be made from the reception theſe meet with, concerning the Publiſhing other Diſcourſes by the ſame Pen. His Compoſures in Latin (which appear to have been written and delivered when he was Principal of

the Colledge *of* Edinburgh *) are alſo Tranſcribing for the Preſs, and may in a convenient time ſee the light, for they need not fear it. He never appeared in Print upon any occaſion in his whole Life, and tho few Men have been more ſollidly Learned in the whole compaſs of Learning, then he was, to which he had added a perfect Command of the purity of the Latin Tongue; and a more than ordinary knowledge of the Greek, Hebrew, and other Oriental Languages, yet he never once broke through that profound humility, which made him*

him judge himſelf neither fit to write, nor ſpeak, tho he did both to a great perfection.

Some words that dropt from him occaſionally ſome time before his Death againſt the Publiſhing of his Papers, put thoſe in whoſe hands they were, under no ſmall difficulties what to do with them, till they maturely conſidered the difference there ought to be made between a ſettled reſolute purpoſe, and an humble Anſwer to a Queſtion put to him, concerning them. Which was conſidered only as an Effect of that modeſty, which was eminent in him to a very high

high degree; and which gave a peculiar Luſter to all his other Excellencies.

The Author was ſo averſe to all Controverſies, that he thought the beſt way to refine ſome low Notions, was to graft great and high thoughts on them; And therefore inſtead of attacking them, or diſputing about them, he ſtudy'd to improve them to ſome pious Reflection. If he went along with ſome of the received Notions of that Age and Place he lived in, he made them much brighter, and leſs offencive by his way of handling them.

If

If the meanneſs of Stile which then prevailed threw him into a little more Art than agrees with that chaſtneſs of Stile which now takes place, it is, what all Men, who have raiſed the ſtrain of their Language have fallen into at firſt: But I will not pretend to excuſe that, which (I confeſs) I admire, and by which I my ſelf have been ſo ſenſibly Edifi'd, that I have been at ſome pains to cauſe to be coppied out for the Preſs what the Author writ in ſo neglected a manner with his own hand.

The Author was the delight and wonder of all that knew him

him, his Thoughts were Noble, and his Expreſſions Beautiful, his Geſture and pronounciation (peculiar to himſelf) had a Gravity, a Majeſty, and yet a ſweetneſs in them, that many ſevere Judges have often ſaid, were beyond all that they had ever ſeen at home or abroad.

That which gave the greateſt authority to all he ſaid, was, that his Life was ſuch a continued courſe of Sublimeſt Vertue, *and the moſt elevated Piety, that has appeared in this Age. Thoſe who have known him the moſt, and the longeſt, have often ſaid, that in a courſe*

of

of many years acquaintance, they ſcarcely ever ſaw him once out of that deeply ſerious State in which they themſelves wiſh'd to be found in their laſt minutes.

This may look ſomewhat high to thoſe who knew him not: But thoſe who did know him, and are yet alive, will, I am confident, juſtifie the truth of this ſhort Character. A fuller Account of his Life is promiſed by a better Pen, and therefore I will ſay no more on a Subject, that I am very ſenſible is too high for me to manage.

To Conclude, I, who reckon, that the knowledge I had

of

of him for some years, the few Sermons I heard him preach, and the many of his Composing which I have read, will be no small Article of the Accompt I must render at the last and dreadful Day, have thought it one part of my Duty to be Instrumental to communicate these to others, who I hope will profit more by them, than I my self have been able yet to do. And in this hope and assurance I recommend those Discourses and the Readers of them, to the Blessing and Grace of Almighty God through his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

SER-

SERMON I.

PREFACE.

MAny and great are the Evils that lodge within the heart of man, and they come forth abundantly both by the Tongue, and by the Hand, yet the heart is not emptied of them; yea, the more it vent them outwardly, the more they increaſe within: Well might he that knew the heart ſo well, call it an *evil Treaſure:* We find the Prophet *Ezekiel* in his 8 Chap. *Led by the Lord in viſion to Jeruſalem, to view the ſins of the Jews that remained in time of the Captivity*; when he had ſhewed him one abomination, he cauſed him to dig through the Wall, to enter and diſcover more, and ſo directed him ſeveral times, from one place to another, and ſtill ſaid *I will ſhew thee yet greater abominations:* Thus is it with thoſe, whom the Lord leads into an Examination of their own hearts (for men are uſually ſtrangers to themſelves) by the light of his Word and Spirit going before them, he lets them ſee heaps of abominations in every Room, and the vileſt in the moſt retired and darkeſt corners; and truly ſhould he leave them there they would deſpair of remedy; no, he makes this diſcovery on purpoſe that

they ſhould ſue to him for help. Do ſo then as many as have taken any notice of the evils of your own hearts; tell the Lord they're is own works; he formed the heart of man within him, and they are his own choice too, *My Son give me thy heart.* Intreat him to redreſs all thoſe abuſes wherewith Satan and Sin have filled it, and then, to take poſſeſſion of it himſelf, for therein conſiſts its happineſs. This is, or ſhould be, a main end of our reſortings to his Houſe, and Service: Wrong not your ſelves ſo far as to turn theſe ſerious exerciſes of Religion, into an idle divertiſement. What a happineſs were it, if every time you come to his ſolemn worſhip, ſome of your ſtrongeſt ſins did receive a new wound, and ſome of your weakeſt graces a new ſtrength.

James III. 17.

But the Wiſdom that is from above, is firſt Pure, then Peaceable, Gentle, and eaſie to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality, and without Hypocriſie.

Gen. 3. 5. GOD *doth know that in the day that ye ſhall eat thereof your eyes ſhall be opened, and ye ſhall be as Gods knowing good and evil,* was the firſt hiſſing of that old Serpent, by which he poyſoned Mankind in the Root. Man not contented with the impreſſion of God's Image in which

which he was Created, loſt it by catching at a ſhadow; climbing higher than his ſtation he fell far below it; ſeeking to be more than man, to become as God, he made himſelf leſs then Man, he lodged not at night in honor, but became as the Beaſts that periſh; ever ſince Nature's beſt Wiſdom is full of Impurity Turbulency, and Diſtemper: Nor can any thing rectifie it, but a Wiſdom from above, that both cleanſeth and compoſeth the Soul, *It is firſt Pure, and then Peaceable.*

This Epiſtle, as ſome that follow, is called, *General*, both by reaſon of the diſperſion of the parties to whom it is addreſt, and the univerſality of the Subject which it treats: Containing a great number (if not all) of the neceſſary Directions and Comforts of a Chriſtians life, both from the Active, and Paſſive part of it. It's evident that the Apoſtles main deſign is, to arm the diſperſed *Jews* againſt all kinds of temptations, both theſe of affliction, in the 1 *Chap.* at the 2. *verſe*, and ſinful Temptations *verſe* 13. And having diſcourſed of two ſpecial means of ſtrengthening them againſt both, ſpeaking to God in Prayer, and hearing God ſpeak in his Word, in the two laſt *verſes* of that 1 *Chap.* he recommends, as chief duties of Religion, and ſure evidences of integrity in Religion, firſt *Meekneſs*, and *Moderation* chiefly in their Speeches, and then *Charity*, and *Purity* in their *Actions*; inſiſting largely upon the latter, in the 2. *Chapter*, and upon the former, the ruling of the *Tongue* in

this 3. *Chap.* and here towards the end of it he ſhews the true oppoſite ſpring of miſcarriage in Speech and Action, and of right ordering and regulating of both; evil Converſation, Strifes, and Envyings, are the fruits of a baſe Wiſdom that is *Earthly, Senſual,* and *Deviliſh, verſe* 15. But *Purity, Meekneſs,* and *Mercy,* are the proper effects, and certain ſigns of Heavenly Wiſdom.

The Wiſdom that is from above, is firſt Pure: its gentleneſs can agree with any thing except *Impurity*: then its *Peaceable,* it offends no body, except *Purity* offend them: It is not raging and boiſtrous; *It is not only* Pure, *being void of that mire and dirt, which the wicked are ſaid to caſt out like the Sea,* Iſa. 57. 20. But peaceable likewiſe, not ſwelling, and reſtleſs like the Sea as is there ſaid of the wicked; nor is it only peaceable negatively, not offending, but as the word bears εἰρηνικὴ pacifique, diſpoſed to make, and ſeek *Peace,* and as it readily offends none, ſo it is not eaſily offended; 'tis *Gentle* and *Moderate,* ἐπιεικὴς and if offended εὐπειθὴς eaſily entreated to forgive; and as it eaſily paſſeth by mens offences, ſo it doth not paſs by, but looks upon their diſtreſſes, and wants; as full of compaſſion, as it is free from unruly and diſtemper'd paſſions, nor reſts it in an affecting ſympathy, its *Mercy* is helpful, *full of mercy, and good fruits,* and it both forgives, and pities, and gives without partiality, and without Hypocriſie [ἀδιάκριτος καὶ ἀνυπόκριτος] The word may as well bear another ſenſe, no

leſs

leſs ſuiting both with this Wiſdom, and theſe its other qualities: That is, not taking upon it a cenſorious diſcerning, and judging of others: They that have moſt of this Wiſdom, are leaſt rigid to thoſe that have leſs of it; I know no better evidence of ſtrength in grace, then to bear much with thoſe that are weak in it. And laſtly, as it ſpares the infirmities of others, ſo it makes not falſe and vain ſhews of its own excellencies, 'tis *without Hypocriſie*. This denies two things, both *Diſſimulation* and *Oſtentation*; the art of *Diſſembling* or *Hypocrite craft*, is no part of this Wiſdom; and for the other *Oſtentation*, ſurely the air of applauſe is too light a purchaſe for ſolid Wiſdom. The works of this Wiſdom may be ſeen, yea they ſhould be ſeen, and may poſſibly be now and then commended; but they ſhould not be done for that low end, either to be ſeen or to be commended; ſurely no, being of ſo noble extraction, this having deſcended from Heaven, will be little careful for the eſtimation of thoſe that are of the Earth, and are but too often of the Earth, Earthly.

The due order of handling theſe particulars more fully cannot well be miſt: Doubtleſs the Subject, *Wiſdom from above*, requires our firſt conſideration, next the excellent qualities that are attributed to it, and laſtly their order is to be conſidered; the rather becauſe ſo clearly expreſt, *firſt Pure then Peaceable*, &c.

Wiſdom from above] There be two things in that: There's the general term of Wiſdom

common to diverſe ſorts of Wiſdom, though moſt eminently, and truly belonging to this beſt Wiſdom. Then there is the Birth or Original of this Wiſdom, ſerving as its difference to ſpecifie and diſtinguiſh it from all the reſt, *Wiſdom from above.* Wiſdom in the general is a very plauſible word among men; who is there that would not willingly paſs for wiſe, yea often thoſe that are leaſt of all ſuch, are moſt deſirous to be accounted ſuch, and where this fails them, they uſually make up that want in their own conceit, and ſtrong opinion: nor do men only thus love the reputation of Wiſdom, but they naturally deſire to be wiſe, as they do to be happy; yet through corrupt Natures blindneſs, they do as naturally miſtake and fall ſhort both of the one and the other, and being once wrong, the more progreſs they make, they are further out of the way. And pretending to Wiſdom in a falſe way, they ſtill befool themſelves, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* 1.22. φάσκοντες εἶναι σοφοὶ ἐμωράνθησαν, *Profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became fools.*

Our Apoſtle *v.* 15. ſpeaking of that wicked Wiſdom, that is fruitful of Wrongs, Striffes, and Debates, and that is only abuſively to be called *Wiſdom,* ſhews what kind of Wiſdom it is, by three notable Characters, *Earthly, Natural,* and *Deviliſh,* which though they be here joyntly attributed to one and the ſame ſubject, yet we may make uſe of them to ſignifie ſome differences of falſe Wiſdom. There is an *Infernal,* or *deviliſh Wiſdom,* proper for contriving

contriving cruelties, and oppreſſions, or ſubtil ſhifts, and deceits, that make Atheiſm a main Baſis and Pillar of State policy; *Such are thoſe that deviſe miſchief upon their Beds*, &c. *Mich.* 2. This is Serpentine Wiſdom not joyned with, but moſt oppoſite to the Dove like ſimplicity. There is a *Earthly* Wiſdom that draws not ſo deep in impiety, as that other, yet is ſufficient to keep a man out of all acquaintance with God and Divine matters, and is drawing his eye perpetually downwards, employing him in the purſuit of ſuch things as cannot fill the Soul, except it be with anguiſh and vexation, *Ezek.* 28. 4, 5. That dexterity of gathering Riches, where its not attended with the Chriſtian art of right uſing them, abaſes mens Souls and indiſpoſes them wholly for this Wiſdom that is from above. There is a *natural Wiſdom* far more plauſible then the other two, more harmleſs then that helliſh Wiſdom, and more refined than that earthly Wiſdom, yet no more able to make man holy, and happy than they; *Natural* φυσικὴ, tis the word the Apoſtle St. *Paul* uſeth 1 *Cor.* 2. ἀνὴρ ψυχικὸς, naming the natural man by his better part, his Soul; intimating that the Soul, even in the higheſt faculty of it, the Underſtanding, and that in the higheſt pitch of excellency to which Nature can raiſe it, is blind in ſpiritual objects; things that are above it, cannot be known but by a *Wiſdom from above*. Nature neither affords this Wiſdom, nor can it of it ſelf acquire it. This is to advertiſe us, that we miſtake not *Mo-*

rality and common Knowledge even of Divine things, for *the Wiſdom that is from above:* This may raiſe a man high above the vulgar, as the Tops of the higheſt Mountains leave the Valleys below them; yet is it ſtill as far ſhort of true ſupernatural Wiſdom, as the higheſt Earth is of the higheſt Sphere. There is one main point of the method of this Wiſdom that is of moſt hard digeſtion to a natural man, and the more natural wiſe he be, the worſe he likes it, *If any man would be Wiſe, let him become a Fool that he may become Wiſe,* 1 Cor. 3. 18. There is nothing gives Nature a greater prejudice againſt Religion than this initial point of ſelf denial: when men of eminent Learning or the ſtrong Politicians hear, *that if they will come to Chriſt, they muſt renounce their own Wiſdom to be fit for his,* many of them go away as ſorrowful as the young Man, when he heard of ſelling all his Goods and giving them to the Poor.

Jeſus Chriſt is that eternal and ſubſtantial Wiſdom that came from above, to deliver men from periſhing in their affected folly, as you find it at large, *Prov.* 8. St. *Paul* in the 1 *Chap.* of his firſt Epiſtle to the *Cor.* calls him *the Wiſdom of God,* v. 24. *That ſhews his excellency in himſelf,* and verſe 30. *He tells us that he is made of God our Wiſdom.* That ſhews his uſefullneſs to us, and by him alone is this infuſed Wiſdom from above conveyed to us; *In him are the hid Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge* Col. 2. 3. *And from his fulneſs* (if at all) *we*

all

all receive Grace for Grace; and of all graces, firſt ſome meaſures of this Wiſdom, without which no man can know himſelf, much leſs can he know God. Now this ſupernatural Wiſdom hath in it both Speculation and Prudence. It is Contemplative, and Practical. Theſe two muſt not be ſeparated, *I Wiſdom dwell with Prudence*, Prov. 8. 12. This Wiſdom in its contemplative part reads Chriſt much and diſcovers in him a new World of hidden excellencies unknown to this old World, *There are Treaſures of Wiſdom in him* Col. 2. 3. But they are *Hid*, and no eye ſees them, but that which is enlightened with this Wiſdom: No, its impoſſible, as he ſays, τὰ θεία γνῶναι κρύπλουτος θεός. But when he renewed underſtanding of a Chriſtian is once initiated into this Study, it both grows daily more and more apprehenſive, and Chriſt becomes more Communicative of himſelf, and makes the Soul acquainted with the amiable Countenance of his Father in him reconciled. *No man hath ſeen God at any time, the only begotten Son which is in the Boſom of the Father, he hath declared him*, S. Joh. 1. 18. What wonder if the unlettered, and deſpiſed Chriſtian know more of the myſteries of Heaven, than the Naturaliſt, though both Wiſe and Learned? Chriſt admits the Believer into his Boſom, and *He* is in the Boſom of the Father. But withal know, that all this knowledge though ſpeculatively high, yet deſcends to *Practice*; as it learns what God is, ſo it thence teacheth Man, what he ſhould

Sophocle's.

be:

be: This Wiſdom flows from Heaven, and a Heavenly Converſation flows from it, as we find it there Charactered by theſe practical Graces of *Purity*, *Peace*, *Meekneſs*, &c.

This Wiſdom repreſents to us, the *Purity* of God's Nature, 1 *Joh.* 3 3. It gives the Soul an eye to ſee the Comelineſs and Beauty of *Purity*, as the Philoſopher ſaid of Vertue, to the end it might be loved, he would wiſh no more but that it could be ſeen, and as it thus morally perſwades, ſo by an inſenſible vertue it aſſimilates the Soul to Chriſt, by frequent contemplation: It alſo produces all the motives to Holineſs, and Obedience; it begets theſe precious qualities in the Soul, it giveth a Chriſtian a view of the matchleſs Vertues that are in Chriſt, and ſtirs him up to a diligent, though imperfect imitation of them; it ſets before us Chriſt's ſpotleſs *Purity*, in whoſe mouth there was no guile, and ſo invites us to *Purity*; it repreſents the perpetual calmneſs of his Spirit, that no tempeſt could reach to diſturb it; in his mouth there was contentious noiſe, his voice was not heard in the Streets, and this recommends, *Peaceableneſs*, and *Gentleneſs*, and ſo in the reſt here mentioned.

Hence I conceive may be fitly learned for our Uſe, ſeeing there is a due Wiſdom and Knowledge neceſſary for guidance, and directing in the ways of *Purity* and *Peace*.

'Tis evident, that groſs ignorance cannot conſiſt with the Truth of Religion, much leſs can it be a help, and advantage to it. I ſhall never

never deny that a falſe ſuperſtitious Religion ſtands in need of it; not too much Scripture Wiſdom for the people: The pomp of that vain Religion, like Court Masks, ſhews beſt by candle light; fond Nature likes it well; the day of ſpiritual Wiſdom would diſcover its impoſture too clearly. But to let their foul Devotion paſs, (for ſuch it muſt needs be, that is born of ſo black a Mother as ignorance) let this Wiſdom at leaſt be juſtified of theſe that pretend to be her Children. 'Tis lamentable that amongſt us, where knowledge is not withheld, men ſhould through Sloth and Love of darkneſs, deprive themſelves of it. What abundance of almoſt brutiſh ignorance, is amongſt the Commons? and thence uncleanneſs, and all manner of wickedneſs; a darkneſs that both hides and increaſeth impurity: What's the reaſon of ſo much impiety, and iniquity in all places; but the want of the knowledge of God? *Hoſea* 2. 1, 2. and 2 *Theſ.* 2. 9. Not knowing Jeſus Chriſt, and not obeying his Goſpel are joyned together. It will be found true, that where there is no obedience, there is no right knowledge of Chriſt: But out of all queſtion where there is not a competency of knowledge, there can be no obedience; and as theſe two lodge together, ſo obſerve what attends them both, *ibid.* *He ſhall come in flaming fire to render vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

And if there be any that think to ſhroud unpuniſhed amongſt the thickets of ignorance, eſpecially amidſt the means of knowledge, take notice of this, though it may hide the deformity of Sin from your own ſight for a time, it cannot palliate it from the piercing eye, nor cover it from the revenging hand of Divine Juſtice. As you would eſcape then that wrath to come, come to Wiſdom's School, and how ſimple ſoever ye be as to this World, if you would not periſh with the World, learn to be wiſe unto Salvation.

And truly its mainly important for this effect, That the Miniſters of the Goſpel, be active and dexterous in imparting this Wiſdom to their people. If they would have their Converſation to be Holy, and Peaceable, and Fruitful, *&c.* The moſt expedient way is once to principle them well in the fundamentals of Religion, for therein is their great defect, how can they walk evenly and regularly ſo long as they are in the dark; one main thing is to be often pointing at the way to Chriſt, the Fountain of this Wiſdom, you bid them be Cloathed and Cloath them not.

How needful then is it that Paſtors themſelves be *Seers* indeed, as the Prophets were called of old, not only Faithful, but wiſe diſpenſers, as our Saviour ſpeaks, St. *Luk.* 12. 42. *That they be διδακτικοι, able and apt to Teach.* 1 *Tim* 3. 2. Laudible is the prudence, that trys much the Churches Store-houſes, the Seminaries of Learning, but withal, it is not to be forgot,

got, that as a due Furniture of Learning is very requiſite for this employment, ſo it is not ſufficient. When one is duly enriched that way, there is yet one thing wanting that grows not in Schools: except this infuſed Wiſdom from above ſeaſon and ſanctifie all other endowments, they remain *κοινα*, common and unholy, and therefore unfit for the Sanctuary; amongſt other weak pretences to Chriſts favour in the laſt day, This is one, *We have Preached in thy name*, yet ſays Chriſt, *I never knew you*, ſurely then, they knew not him, and yet they Preacht him. Cold and Lifeleſs, (though never ſo fine and well contrived,) muſt thoſe Diſcourſes be, that are of an *unknown Chriſt*. Paſtors are called Angels, and therefore though they uſe the ſecondary helps of knowledge they are mainly to bring their meſſage from above from the Fountain, the head of this pure Wiſdom.

Pure] If it come from above it muſt needs be *pure originally*, yea it is formally pure too: being a main treat of God's renewed Image in the Soul. By this Wiſdom the Underſtanding is both reſigned, and ſtrengthened to entertain right conceptions of God in his nature, and works. And this is primarily neceſſary, that the mind be not infected with falſe opinions in Religion; if the Spring-head be polluted, the Streams cannot be *pure*; its more important then men uſually think, for a good life. But that which I ſuppoſe is here chiefly intended is, that its *effectively* and *practically pure*,

pure, it purifies the heart, Act. 15. 9. ſaid of Faith (which in ſome ſenſe and acceptation differs not much from this Wiſdom) and conſequently the *Words*, and *Actions* that flow from the heart.

This *Purity* ſome render *Chaſtity*. The Wiſdom from above is *chaſte* ἁγνὴ. The word is indeed often ſo taken and includes that here, but it is too narrow a ſenſe to reſtrict it to that only. It is here an univerſal deteſtation of all impurity, both of Fleſh and Spirit, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. Pride, Selflove, Profanneſs of Spirit and Irreligion, though they do not ſo properly pollute the Body, as carnal uncleaneneſs; yet they do leſs defile the Soul, and make it abominable in the ſight of God. Thoſe Apoſtate Angels called *unclean Spirits*, are uncapable of bodily defilement (tho' indeed they tempt and inveigle Man to it) their own inherent pollutions muſt need be ſpiritual, for they are Spirits. *Idolatry* in Scripture goes often under the name of *Fornication* and *Adultery*, and indeed theſe Sins may mutually borrow and lend their names the one to the other; *Idolatry* may well be called *Spiritual unchaſtity*; and unchaſte Love, *carnal Idolatry*; earthly mindedneſs likewiſe is an impurity of the Soul; in the Apoſtles phraſe Covetouſneſs is Idolatry, and ſo a ſpiritual pollution; yea it may well ſhare with Idolatry in its borrowed name, and be called Adultery too, for it misbeſtows the Souls prime affection upon the Creature, which by right is God's peculiar.

This

This Purity that true Wiſdom works, is contrary to all pollution. We know then in ſome meaſure what it is, it reſts to enquire where it is, and there is the difficulty; it is far eaſier to deſign it in it ſelf, then to find it among men: *Who can ſay I have made my heart clean?* *Prov.* 20. 9. Look upon the greateſt part of Mankind, and you may know at firſt ſight, that Purity is not to be lookt for among them, they ſuffer it not to come near them, much leſs do dwell with them and within them; they hate the very ſemblance of it in others, and themſelves delight in Intemperance and all manner of Licentiouſneſs, like fooliſh Children ſtriving who ſhall go furtheſt into the mire; theſe cannot ſay they have made clean their hearts, for all their Words and Actions will bely them. If you come to the meer Moraliſt, the *World's honeſt man*, and ask him; it may be, he will tell you he hath cleanſed his heart, but believe him not. It will appear he is not yet cleanſed, becauſe he ſays he has done it himſelf, for (you know) there muſt be ſome other beſides man at this Work. Again he riſing no higher than Nature, hath none of this Heavenly Wiſdom in him, and therefore is without this Purity too. But if you chance to take notice of ſome well skilled Hypocrite, every thing you meet with makes you almoſt confident, that *there* is Purity; yet if he be ſtrictly put to't, he may make ſome good account of the pains he hath taken to refine his Tongue and his publick Actions, but he dare

not

not ſay he hath made clean his heart, it troubles his peace to be askt the queſtion: He never intended to baniſh Sin, but to retire it to his innermoſt and beſt room, that ſo it might ewell unſeen within him, and where then ſhould it lodge but in his heart? yet poſſibly becauſe what's outward is ſo fair; and Man cannot look deeper to contradict him, he may embolden himſelf, to ſay he's inwardly ſuitable to his appearance. But there is a day at hand that ſhall to his endleſs ſhame at once diſcover both his ſecret impurity and his impudence in denying it.

After theſe, there follows a few deſpiſed and melancholly perſons (at leaſt as to outward appearance,) who are almoſt always hanging down their heads, and complaining of abundant ſinfulneſs? And ſure, Purity cannot be expected in theſe who are ſo far from it, by their own confeſſion: Yet the Truth is, that ſuch Purity, as is here below, will either be found to lodge among theſe, or no where. Be not deceived, think not that they who loath, and (as they can) fly from the unholineſs of the World, are therefore taken with the conceit of their own holineſs, but as their perfect Purity of juſtification is by Chriſt's Imputed righteouſneſs, ſo likewiſe they will know, and do always acknowledge that their inherent holineſs is from above too, from the ſame Fountain Jeſus Chriſt; the Wiſdom from above is Pure, this their engagement to Heaven, for it excludes vaunting and boaſting.

And

and beſides that, it is imperfect, troubled and ſtained with Sin, which is enough to keep them humble. Their daily ſad experience will not ſuffer them to be ſo miſtaken; their many faults of infirmity, cannot but keep them from this preſumptuous fault. There is a Generation indeed that is *Pure in their own eyes*, (Prov. 30. 12.) But they are ſuch as are not *waſhen from their filthineſs*, They that are waſhed, are ſtill bewailing, that they again contract ſo much defilement. The moſt purified Chriſtians are they that are moſt ſenſible of their impurity. Therefore I called not this, an univerſal freedom from pollution, but an univerſal deteſtation of it, they that are thus Pure, are daily defiled with many Sins, but they cannot be in love with any Sin at all, nor do they willingly diſpence with the ſmalleſt Sins, which a natural Man either ſees not to be Sin (though his dim moon light diſcover groſſer Evils) or if he do ſee them, yet he judges it too much niceneſs to chooſe a great Inconvenience rather then a little Sin. Again they differ in another particular, a natural Man may be ſo far in love with vertue after his manner, as to diſlike his own faults and reſolve to amend them, but yet he would think it a great weakneſs to ſit down and mourn for Sin, *and to afflict his Soul*, as the Scripture ſpeaks; The Chriſtians repentance goes not ſo lightly, there is a great deal more work in it, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. There is not only Indignation againſt impurity, but it proceeds

ceeds to revenge. The Saints we read of in Scripture were ashamed of their impurity, but never of their tears for it: Let the World enjoy their own thoughts and account it folly, yet sure the Christian, that delights in purity, seeing he cannot be free from daily Sin, when he retires himself at night, is then best contented when his eyes serve him most plentifully to weep out the stains of the by-past day; yet he knows withal, that it is only his Redeemers blood that takes away the guilt of them: This is the condition of those that are truely, though not yet fully cleansed from the pollutions of the World by the Spirit of Wisdom and Purity. What mean they then, that would argue themselves out of this Number, because they find yet much dross left, and that they are not so defecated and refined as they would wish to be? On the contrary, this hatred of pollution testifies strongly that the contrary of it, *Purity*, is there; And though its beginnings be small, doubt not, it shall in the end be victorious; The smoaking of this flax shews indeed that there is gross matter there, but it witnesseth likewise that there is fire in it too; and though it be little, we have Christ's own word for it, that it shall not be quenched; and if he favour it, no other *Power* shall be able to quench it. You find not indeed absolute holiness in your persons, nor in your best performances, yet if you breath and follow after it, if the pulse of the heart beat thus, if the main current of your affection be towards

Purity,

Purity, if Sin be in you as your diſeaſe and greateſt grief, and not as your delight, then take courage, you are as pure, as Travellers can be; and notwithſtanding that impure Spirit, *Satan*; and the impurity of your own Spirits vex you daily with temptations, and often foil you, yet in deſpite of them all, you ſhall arrive ſafe at home where perfection dwells.

Wiſdom from above is Pure] Be aſhamed then of your extream folly, you that take pleaſure in any kind of uncleanneſs, eſpecially ſeeing God hath reformed and purged his Houſe amongſt us; you that are, or ſhould be his living Temples, remain not unreformed: If you do, Church-Reformation will be ſo far from profiting you, that as a clearer light it will but ſerve to make your impurity both more viſible and more unexcuſable: If you mean that the Holy Ghoſt ſhould dwell with you, entertain him, avoiding both ſpiritual and fleſhly pollutions. The word here uſed doth more particularly ſignifie Chaſtity, and certainly where ever this Wiſdom from above is, this comely grace is one of her attendants, whatever any have been in times paſt let all be perſwaded henceforth to mortifie all luſtful and carnal affections; know that there is more true and laſting pleaſure in the contempt of unlawful pleaſures, then in the enjoyment of them. Grieve not then the good Spirit of God with Actions or Speeches, yea or with thoughts, that are impure. The un-

holy Soul, like the myſtical *Babylon*, *Apoc.* 18. makes it ſelf a Cage of unclean Birds, and an habitation of filthy Spirits, and if it continues to be ſuch it muſt, when it diſlodges, take up its habitation with curſed Spirits for ever in utter darkneſs. But as for thoſe that are ſincerely and affectionately Pure, That is, Pure in heart, our Saviour hath pronounced their begun happineſs, *Bleſſed are they that are Pure in heart* (and aſſured them of full happineſs) *for they ſhall ſee God.* This Wiſdom is ſent from Heaven on purpoſe to guide the Elect thither by the way of Purity. And mark how well their Reward is ſuited to their Labour, their frequent contemplating and beholding of God's purity as they could, while they were on their Journey, and their labouring to be like him, ſhall bring them to ſit down in Glory, and to be for ever the pure beholders of that pureſt object; They ſhall ſee God, what this is we cannot tell you, nor can you conceive it. But walk Heavenwards in purity, and long to be there, where you ſhall know what it means; *for you ſhall ſee him as he is. Now to that bleſſed Trinity be praiſe for ever.*

SERMON,

SERMON, II.

PREFACE.

I *Will return to my place* (ſaith the Lord by his Prophet) *till they acknowledge their Offence and ſeek my Face. In their affliction they will ſeek me early.* The Father of Mercies hides himſelf from his Children, not to loſe them, but that they may ſeek him; and may learn, having found him, to keep cloſer by him than formerly: He threatens them to keep them from puniſhment; if his threatning work ſubmiſſion, its well, if not, he puniſhes them gently to ſave them from deſtruction. He ſeeks no more but that they acknowledge their offence, and ſeek his Face; wounderful Clemency! for who can forbear to confeſs multitudes of offences that know themſelves? And who can chuſe but ſeek thy Face that ever ſaw thy Face, and that know thee? *In their affliction they will ſeek me early.* He that Prays not till affliction comes and forces him to it, is very ſlothful: but he that Prays not in affliction is altogether ſenſeleſs. Certainly they that at this time are not more than ordinary forward in Prayer, or do not at leaſt deſire and ſtrive to be ſo, cannot well think that there is any Spiritual life within them. Sure *Hoſ.* 5. 15.

it is high time to ſtir up our ſelves to Prayers and Tears, all may bear arms in that kind of Service, weak Women may be ſtrong in Prayer, and thoſe Tears wherein they uſually abound upon other occaſions cannot be ſo well ſpent as this way. Let them not run out in howlings and impatience, but bring them, by bewailing ſins, private as well as publick, to quench this publick Fire; and ye Men, yea, ye Men of courage, account it no diſparagement thus to weep; we read often of *David's* Tears which was no ſtain to his valour. That cloud that hangs over us, which the frequent vapors of our Sins have made, except it diſſolve and fall down again in theſe ſweet ſhowers of Godly Tears, is certainly reſerved to be the matter of a dreadful ſtorm; be inſtant every one in ſecret for the averting of this wrath, and let us now again unite the crys of our hearts for this purpoſe to our compaſſionate God, in the Name and Mediation of his Son, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Job XXXIV. 31, 32.

Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born Chaſtiſement, I will not offend any more.

That which I ſee not, Teach thou me: If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

THE great Sin, and the great Miſery of Man is, the forgetting of God, and the great End

End and Uſe of his Works and of his Word is, to teach us the right Remembrance and Conſideration of Him, in all Eſtates. Theſe words do particularly inſtruct us in the application of our thoughts towards him in the time of Affliction. The ſhortneſs and the various ſignification of the words uſed in the Original gives occaſion to ſome other Readings, and another ſence of them. But this we have in our Tranſlation, being not only very profitable, but very congruous, both to the words of the primitive Text, and to the contexture of the Diſcourſe, I ſhall keep to it, without dividing your thoughts by the mentioning of any other. Neither will I lead you ſo far about, as to ſpeak of the great diſpute of this Book, and the queſtion about which it is held; He that ſpeaks here, though the youngeſt of the Company, yet as a wiſe, and calm ſpirited Man, cloſes all with a diſcourſe of excellent Temper, and full of grave uſeful Inſtructions, amongſt which this is one.

Surely it is meet to be ſaid, or ſpoke to God] This ſpeaking to God, though it may be vocal, yet it is not neceſſarily nor chiefly ſo, but is always mainly, and may often be, only mental, without this the words of the mouth, how well choſen, and well expreſt ſo ever they be, are to God of no account or ſignification at all. But if the heart ſpeak, even when there is not a word in the mouth, its that he hearkens to, and regards that ſpeech, tho' made by a voice that none hears, but he,

and is a Language that none understands but He.

But it is a rare unfrequented thing, this Communing of the heart with God, speaking its thoughts to him concerning it self, and concerning him, and his dealing with it, and the purposes and intentions it hath towards him, which is the speech here recommended, and is that Divine exercise of Meditation, and Soliloquy of the Soul with it self, and with God, hearkening what the Lord God speaks to us, within us, and our hearts ecchoing, and resounding his words, as *Ps.* 27. 8, 9. And opening to him our thoughts of them, and of our selves, though they stand open, and he sees them all, even when we tell him not of them, yet because he loves us, he loves to hear them of our own speaking *Let me hear thy voice for it is sweet*; as a Father delights in the little stammering lisping Language of his beloved Child. And if the reflex affection of Children be in us, we will love also to speak with our Father, and to tell him all our mind (παῤῥησια) and to be often with him in the entertainments of our secret thoughts.

But the most of Men are little within, either they wear out their hours in vain discourse with others, or possibly vainer discourses with themselves, even those that are not of the worst sort, and possibly that have their times of secret Prayer, yet do not so delight to think of God and to speak with him, as they do to be

be converſant in other Affairs, and Companies, and Diſcourſes, in which there is a great deal of froth, and emptineſs: Men think by talking of many things, to be refreſht, and yet when they have done, find that it is nothing; and that they had much better have been alone, or have ſaid nothing. Our Thoughts and Speeches in moſt things run to waſte, yea are defiled, as water ſpilt on the Ground, is both loſt, cannot be gathered up again, and it is polluted, mingled with duſt but no word ſpoke to God, from the ſerious Senſe of a holy Heart is loſt, he receives it, and returns it into our boſom with advantage, a Soul that delights to ſpeak to him, will find that he alſo delights to ſpeak to it. And this Communication certainly is the ſweeteſt and happieſt choice, to ſpeak little with Men, and much with God. One ſhort word, ſuch as this here, ſpoke to God, in a darted thought, eaſes the heart more when it is afflicted, then the largeſt Diſcourſes, and Complainings, to the greateſt and powerfulleſt of Men; or the kindeſt and moſt friendly. It gives not only eaſe but joy, to ſay to God I have ſinned, yet I am thine, or as here, *I have born Chaſtiſement, I will no more offend.* The time of affliction is peculiarly a time of ſpeaking to God, and ſuch ſpeech as this, is peculiarly befitting ſuch a time. And this is one great recommendation of affliction, that it is a time of wiſer, and more ſober thoughts; a time of the returning of the mind inwards and upwards,

wards. A high place, Fullneſs, and Pleaſure draws the mind more outwards; great light, and white Colours diſgregate the ſight of the eye, and the very thoughts of the mind too. And Men find that the night is a fitter Seaſon for deep thoughts. *Its better*, ſays Solomon, *to go to the Houſe of Mourning, then to the Houſe of Feasting*; Thoſe blacks, made the mind more ſerious. 'Tis a rare thing to find much Retirement unto God, much Humility, and Brokenneſs of Spirit, true Purity and Spiritualneſs of heart in the affluences and great proſperities of the World. 'Tis no eaſie thing to carry a very full Cup even, and to digeſt well the fatneſs of a great Eſtate, and great Place. They are not to be envyed that have them; even though they be of the better ſort of Men, its a thouſand to one, but that they ſhall be loſers by the gains and advancements of this World, ſuffering proportionably great abatements of their beſt advantages, by their proſperity. The generality of Men, while they are at eaſe, do ſecurely neglect God, and little mind either to ſpeak to him, or to hear him ſpeak to them. God complains thus of his own people, *I ſpoke to them in their proſperity and they would not hear.* The noiſes of Coach-Wheels, of their Pleaſures, and of their great Affairs ſo fill their ears, that the *ſtill voice*, wherein God is, cannot be heard; *I will bring her into the Wilderneſs, and there I wall ſpeak to her heart*, ſays God of his Church; There the heart is more at quiet to hear God, and to ſpeak

Βαθύτερον γὰρ ἡ κλαυθμῶνος ἢ οἴκου εὐφροσύνης.

ſpeak to him, and is diſpoſed to ſpeak in the Stile here preſcribed, humbly and repentingly.

I have born Chaſtiſement] The ſpeaking thus unto God under Affliction ſignifies: 1. That our Affliction is from his hand, and to the acknowledgement of this Truth, the very natural Conſciences of Men do incline them. Though trouble be the general Lot of Mankind, yet it doth not come on him by an improvidential fatality, *Though Man is born to Trouble as the ſparks flie upward*, Job 5. *Yet it comes not out of the duſt.* It is no leſs true, and in it ſelf no leſs clear, that all the good we enjoy, and all the evil we ſuffer comes from the ſame hand; but we are naturally more ſenſible of evil, then of good, and therefore do more readily reflect upon the Original and Cauſes of it; our diſtreſſes lead us unto the notice of the righteous God inflicting them, and our own unrighteous ways procuring them, and provoking him ſo to do, and therefore it is meet to ſpeak in this ſubmiſſive humble Language to him. It is by all means neceſſary to ſpeak to him, he is the Party we have to deal withal, or to ſpeak to, even in thoſe afflictions, whereof Men are the intervenient viſible cauſes; They are indeed but inſtrumental cauſes, the Rod and Staff in his hand that ſmites us; therefore our buſineſs is with him, in whoſe ſupream hand alone the mitigations and increaſes, the continuance, and the ending of our troubles lie, *Heb:* 4.

lie; *Who gave* Jacob *to the ſpoil and* Iſrael *to the Robbers? Did not the Lord againſt whom we have Sinned?* So *Lam.* 1. 14. *The yoke of my Tranſgreſſions is bound on by thy hand.* Therefore it is altogether neceſſary in all afflictions to ſpeak to him, and as its neceſſary to ſpeak to him, it is meet to ſpeak thus to him, *I have born Chaſtiſement, I will no more offend.* Theſe words have in them, the true compoſure of *real Repentance, humble Submiſſion,* and *holy Reſolution, I have born Chaſtiſement,* that is, I have juſtly born it, and do heartily ſubmit to it, I bear it juſtly, and take it well, Lord I acquit thee, and accuſe my ſelf; this Language becomes the innocenteſt perſon in the World in their ſuffering. *Job* knew it well, and did often acknowledge it in his precedeing Speeches; though ſometimes in the heat of diſpute, and oppoſure to the uncharitable, and unjuſt imputations of his Friends, he ſeems to overſtrain the aſſertion of his own integrity, which *Elihu* here corrects, you know he cries out *I have ſinned againſt thee, what ſhall I do unto thee,* O *thou preſerver of man!* and Chap. 9. *If I waſh my ſelf with Snow-water, and make my hands never ſo clean, yet ſhalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own Cloaths ſhall abhor me.*

Vain fooliſh perſons fret, and foam at the miſcarriage of a cauſe they apprehend to be righteous, but this is a great vanity and inconſiderate temerity in not obſerving, the great and apparent unrighteouſneſs in the perſons managing it. But though both the cauſe and the

the perſons were juſt to the greateſt hight imaginable amongſt men, yet ſtill were it meet to ſpeak thus unto God in the loweſt acknowledgements and confeſſions, *that righteouſneſs belongs unto him, and unto us ſhame and confuſion of face*, ſo ſays the Church *Lam.* 3. *The Lord is righteous, for I have rebelled againſt his Commandments.* Though affliction is not always deſignedly intended as the Chaſtiſement of ſome particular Sin, yet where Sin is (and that is the caſe of all the Sons of *Adam*) affliction coming in, may ſafely be conſidered in its natural cognation and alliance with Sin, and ſo preſs forth humble confeſſions of Sin, and reſolutions againſt it. And thus in *Lev.* 26. 41. *They ſhall except of the puniſhment of their iniquity*, ſhall take it humbly and penitently and kiſs the Rod.

Oh! That there were ſuch a heart in us! That inſtead of empty words that ſcatter themſelves in the wind, our many vain diſcourſes we hold one with another, concerning our paſt and preſent ſufferings, and further fears, and diſputing of many fruitleſs, and endleſs queſtions, we were more abundantly turning our Speech this way, in unto God, and Saying, *We deſire to give thee Glory, and take Shame to our ſelves, and to bear our Chaſtiſement, and to offend no more, to return each from his evil way*, and to gain this by the furnace, the purging away of our droſs, our many and great iniquities, our Oaths, and Curſings, and lying, our Deceit, and Oppreſſions, and Pride, and Cove-

Covetouſneſs, our baſe love of our ſelves, and hating one another; that we may be delivered from the Tyranny of our own luſts, and paſſions, and in other things *Let the Lord do with us as ſeems good in his eyes*; ſpeaking to God in *Ephraims* words, *Jeremiah* 31. 18, 19, 20. words not unlike theſe, would ſtir his bowels, as there. As it is ſaid, that one ſtring perfectly tuned to another, being toucht, the other ſtirs of it ſelf, when a ſtubborn Child leaves ſtrugling under the Rod, and turns to intreating, the Father then leaves ſtriking; nothing overcomes him but that. When a man ſays unto God, *Father I have provoked thee to this, but Pardon, and through thy Grace I will do ſo no more*, Then the Rod is thrown aſide, and the Father of Mercies, and his humbled Child fall to mutual tenderneſs and embraces.

What I ſee not teach thou me, &c.] The great Article of Converſion is the diſengagement of the heart from the love of Sin. In that poſture, as it actually forſakes whatſoever it perceives to be amiſs, ſo it ſtands in an abſolute readineſs to return to every duty that yet lies hidden, upon the firſt diſcovery; that is here the genuine voice of a repentant Sinner, *What I ſee not teach thou me*, &c.

This is a very neceſſary ſuit, even for the moſt diſcerning, and cleareſt ſighted Penitent, both in reference to the Commandment, and Rule for diſcovering the general nature, and ſeveral kinds of Sin; and withal for the appli-

cation

cation of this general light, to the examen of a Mans own heart, and ways, that ſo he may have a more exact and particular accompt of his own Sins.

The former is the knowledge of the Laws of God, and Rule by which a Man is to try, and to judge himſelf. The moſt knowing are not above the need of this requeſt, yea, I am perſwaded, the moſt knowing know beſt how much they need it, and are moſt humbled in themſelves in the conſcience of their ignorance and darkneſs in Divine things, and are moſt earneſt, and preſſing in this daily Supplication, for increaſes of light, and Spiritual knowledge from him who is the Fountain of it, *What I ſee not teach thou me.* On the other ſide, the leaſt knowing, are often the moſt confident, that they know all; and ſwelled with a conceited ſufficiency of their model, and determination of all things, both Dogmatical, and Practical. And therefore are the moſt imperious and magiſterial in their concluſions, and the moſt impatient of contradiction, or even of the moſt modeſt diſſent.

The wiſeſt, and holy'ſt perſons, ſpeak always in the humbleſt, and moſt depreſſing ſtile of their own knowledge, and that not with an affectation of modeſty; but in the real ſenſe of the thing as it is, and the ſincere accompt they give of it, and that commonly when they are declaring themſelves moſt ſolemnly, as in the ſight of God, or ſpeaking in Supplication to him with whom they dare leaſt of all

all diſſemble, whoſoever he was that ſpake theſe words *Prov.* 30. Sure he was a man of eminent Wiſdom, and Piety, and yet begins thus, *Surely I am more brutiſh then any Man, and have not the underſtanding of a Man, I have neither learned Wiſdom, nor have I the knowledge of the Holy.* And tho' he was ſo diligent a Student, and ſo great a Proficient in the Law of God, yet how importunate a Petitioner is he, for the underſtanding of it, as if he knew nothing at all? beſides the like expreſſions in other *Pſalms*; *Pſal.* 119. in that one *Pſalm* that being of ſuch length hath nothing but the breathing forth of his affection to the Word, and Law of God, how often doth he in it reiterate that, *Teach me thy Statutes:* So often that a *carnal* mind is tempted to grow weary of it, as a nauſeating Tautology; but he made it ſtill new, with the freſhneſs, and vehemency of his affection. *Make me to underſtand the way of thy Precepts; Give me underſtanding, and I ſhall keep thy Law.* And *Open thou mine eyes, that I may ſee the wonders of thy Law*; unſeal mine eyes, as if ſtill veiled and dark. Theſe are the earneſt and nobly ambitious deſires that daily ſollicite holy hearts, and ſtir them to ſollicite the Teacher of hearts, to be admitted more into the ſecrets, and receſſes of Divine knowledge, not to thoſe abyſſes that God intends ſhould be ſecret ſtill, and from which he hath barr'd out our curioſity, as the forbidden Tree of Knowledge, theſe ſecrets that belong to himſelf alone, and concern us not to enquire after, and certainly to

be

be *wading in theſe deeps, is the way to be drown'd in them. The Searcher of Majeſty ſhall be oppreſt with Glory*; yet, there is in Man a perverſe prepoſterous deſire to pore upon ſuch things as are on purpoſe hidden, that we ſhould not enquire after them; and to ſeek after uſeleſs empty ſpeculations of them, which is a luxury, and intemperance of the underſtanding, like unto that, and ſpringing from that, which at firſt undid us in the Root. Theſe are times full of thoſe empty airy Queſtions, and Notions in which there is no clearneſs, nor certainty to be attained, and if it were, yet would ſerve to little or no purpoſe, not making the Man that thinks he hath found them out, one jot the better, or hollier Man then he was before: *What avails it*, ſays that devout Author, *to diſpute and diſcourſe high concerning the Trinity, and want humility, and ſo diſpleaſe that Trinity.* The Light and Knowledge ſued according to the intendment of this Copy, is of another nature, ſuch as purifies the heart, and rectifies the Life. *What I ſee not teach thou me.* That is, of ſuch things as may ſerve this end, *That if I have done iniquity I may do it no more*, this is ſound and ſolid knowledge, ſuch a light as enflames the heart with the love of God, and of the beauties of holineſs; and ſtill as it grows, makes thoſe to grow likewiſe. Such are ſtill, we ſee, *David*'s multiplied Supplications in that *Pſalm*; not to know reſerved and unuſeful things, *But hide not thy Commandments from me. Thy hands have made me*

and faſhioned me. Now, what is that thy Creature and Workmanſhip begs of thee? what is that which will compleat my being, and make me do honour to my Maker? This is it, *Give me underſtanding that I may learn thy Commandments.* You that would be ſucceſsful Supplicants in this requeſt, wean your hearts from this vanity of deſire, ſuch knowledge is as the Cypreſs-Trees, fair and tall, but fruitleſs and ſapleſs. Apply all you know to the purging out of Sin, and intend all the further knowledge you deſire, to that ſame end. Seek to be acquainted with higher rules of Mortification, and Self-denial, and Charity, then yet you have either practiſed, or poſſibly ſo much as thought on; that by theſe, your Affections and Actions may be advanced to greater degrees of purity, and conformity with the holineſs of God. And for this end, beg of him to teach you what you ſee not in the exactneſs of the Law, and Rule. And withal, which is the other thing in this word, that what you ſee not in the application of it, and ſearch of your ſelf, he would likewiſe ſhew you that. For in that, we are commonly as undiſcerning and dimſighted, as in the other; even where Men have ſome notion of the Rule and their Duty, yet they perceive not their own, even their groſs receſſions, and declinings from it: Love is a blinding thing, and above all Love, Self-love; and every Man is naturally his own Flatterer, he deals not faithfully and ſincerely with himſelf in the ſearch of

of his own evils. Now this we are to intreat of God, to be led into our ſelves, and to be applyed to the work of ſelf-ſearching, by his own hand, not only to have a right apprehenſion of the Law given us, but a true ſight of our ſelves. Oh! How many hidden undiſcerned, yea unſuſpected impurities, and follies are there in the hearts of thoſe that are the moſt diligent in this inquiry, much more in the greater part, even of ſuch as cannot abſolutely be denied the name of good men, ſome honeſt intentions, and good deſires there are in them; but they are ſlothful, and unwilling to go to this painful buſineſs of trying and judging themſelves, and when they ſet to it, many ſecret corners, and in thoſe many latent inordinacies do eſcape their ſearch. *Cleanſe me from ſecret faults*, ſays *David*, that is not only thoſe hidden from Men, but even from my ſelf, as is clearly his meaning, by the words precedeing, *who knows the errors of his Life.* Therefore is it neceſſary that we deſire light of God, *The Spirit of a Man is the Candle of the Lord*, ſays *Solomon*, *ſearching the innermoſt parts of the Belly*; But it is a Candle unlighted, when he does not illuminate it for that ſearch. Oh! What a deal of Vanity and love of this World, Envy and ſecret Pride, lurks in many of our hearts, that we do not at all perceive, till God cauſeth us to ſee it, leading us in as he did the Prophet in the Viſion, to ſee the Idolatry of the *Jews* in his very Temple, by which they had provoked

him to forſake it, and go far from his ſanctuary; and having diſcovered one parcel, leads him in further, and makes him enter through the Wall, and adds often, *Son of Man haſt thou ſeen theſe, I will cauſe thee ſee yet more abominations, and yet more abominations.* Thus is it within many of us that ſhould be his Temples, but we have multitude of Images of Jealouſie, one lying hid behind another, till he thus diſcover them to us. Oh! What need have we to entreat him thus, *What I ſee not ſhew thou me!*

Now in both theſe, both in the knowledge of our Rule, and of our ſelves, though there may be ſome uſeful ſubſerviency of the Miniſtry of Men; yet the great Teacher of the true knowledge of his Law, and of himſelf, and of our ſelves, is God. Men may ſpeak to the Ear, but his Chair is in Heaven, that Teaches hearts, *Cathedram habet in cælo.* Matchleſs Teacher! that Teacheth more in one hour, than Men can do in a whole Age! That can cure the invincible unteachableneſs of the dulleſt heart, *Gives underſtanding to the ſimple, and opens the eyes of the Blind.* So then would we be made wiſe, wiſe for Eternity, learned in real living Divinity, Let us ſit down at his feet and make this our continual requeſt. *What I ſee not teach thou me.*

And if I have done, &c.] That's any iniquity that I yet know not of, any hidden Sin, let me but once ſee it, and, I hope, thou ſhalt ſee it no more within me; not willingly lodged and entertained. This ſpeaks an entire total

total giving up all Sin, and proclaming utter defiance, and enmity againſt it, caſting out what is already found out without delay, and reſolving that ſtill in further ſearch, as it ſhall be more diſcovered, it ſhall be forthwith diſlodged, without a thought of ſparing or partial indulgence to any thing that is Sin, or like it, or may any way befriend it, or be an occaſion and incentive of it. This is that abſolute renouncing of Sin, and ſurrender of the whole Soul, and our whole ſelves to God: which whoſoever do not heartily conſent to and reſolve on, their Religion is in vain, and (which is here the point) their Affliction is in vain; whatſoever they have ſuffered, they have gained nothing by all their ſufferings, if their hearts remain ſtill Selfwill'd, Stubborn, Untamed, and unpliable to God. And this makes their miſeries out of meaſure miſerable, and their ſins out of meaſure ſinful; whereas were it thus qualify'd, and had it any operation this way towards the ſubjecting of their hearts unto God, Affliction were not to be called miſery, but would go under the Title of a bleſſedneſs: *Bleſſed is the Man whom thou correcteſt and teacheſt him out of thy Law.* That ſuiting with this here deſired, *I have born Chaſtiſement: What I ſee not teach thou me, and if I have done iniquity, I will do it no more.* Oh! Were it thus with us *M. B.* how might we rejoyce, and inſert into our Praiſes all that is come upon us, if it had wrought or advanced any thing of this kind within us, this bleſſed compliance with the

will of God, not entertaining any think knowingly that diſpleaſes him; finding a pleaſure in the denial and deſtruction of our own moſt beloved pleaſures at his appointment, and for his ſake, whatſoever is in us, and dear eſt to us, that would offend us, that would draw us to offend him, *were it the right hand let it be cut off, or the right eye let it be pluckt out*: Or to make ſhorter work, let the whole Man die at once Crucified with Jeſus, *That we may be henceforth dead to Sin, dead to the World, dead to our ſelves, and alive only to God.*

SERMON,

SERMON III.

PREFACE.

THere is no Exerciſe ſo delightful to thoſe that are truly godly, as the ſolemn Worſhip of God, if they find his powerful, and ſenſible preſence in it; and indeed, there is nothing on earth more like to Heaven than that is. But when he withdraws himſelf, and witholds the influence and breathings of his Spirit in his ſervice, then good Souls find nothing more lifeleſs and uncomfortable; but there is this difference, even at ſuch a time betwixt them, and thoſe that have no Spiritual life in them at all, that they find, and are ſenſible of this difference, whereas the other know not what it means. And for the moſt part, the greateſt number of thoſe that meet together with a profeſſion to Worſhip God, yet are ſuch as do not underſtand this difference. Cuſtom and formality draws many to the ordinary places of publick Worſhip, and fills too much of the Room. And ſomtimes Novelty and Curioſity to places not ordinary, has a large ſhare. But how few are there that come on purpoſe to meet with God in his Worſhip, and to find his power in it ſtrengthning their weak

weak Faith, and weakning their ſtrong Corruptions; affording them proviſion of Spiritual ſtrength, and comfort againſt times of trial: And, in a word, advancing them ſome ſteps forward in their Journey towards Heaven, where Happineſs and Perfection dwells? Certainly theſe ſweet effects are to be found in theſe Ordinances, if we would look after them; let it grieve us then, that we have ſo often loſt our labour in the Worſhip of God, through our own neglect, and intreat the Lord, that at this time, he would not ſend us away empty, for how weak ſo ever the means be, if he put his ſtrength, the work ſhall be done, in ſome meaſure, to his Glory, and our Edification. Now that he may be pleaſed to do ſo, to leave ableſſing behind him, let us Pray, *&c.*

Iſaiah XXVIII. 5, 6.

In that day ſhall the Lord of hoſts be for a Crown of Glory, and for a diadem of beauty unto the reſidue of his People:
And for a ſpirit of judgment to him that ſitteſt in judgment, and for ſtrength to them that turn the battel to the gate.

ALL the Works of Divine Providence are full of Wiſdom and Juſtice, even every one ſeverally conſidered; yet we obſerve them beſt to be ſuch, when we take notice

tice of their order, and mutual aſpect one to another, whether in the ſucceſſion of times, or ſuch paſſages as are contemporary, and fall in together, at one and the ſame time. As when the Lord brings notable Judgments upon the Proud Workers of Iniquity, and at the ſame time confers ſpecial Mercies on his own People, who is there that may not perceive Juſtice and Mercy illuſtrating, and beautifying one another? It is true, the full reward, and perfect reſt of the Godly, is not here below, they would be ſorry if it were; nor is this the place of Plenary puniſhment for the ungodly. Men may look for a Judgment too, yet the Lord is pleaſed at ſometimes to give ſome reſemblances, and pledges, as it were, of that great and laſt Judgment, in remarkable paſſages of Juſtice and Mercy, at one and the ſame time; and ſuch a time it is, that the Prophet foretells in this his Sermon, which concerns the two Siſter Kingdoms of *Iſrael* and *Judah*. Having denounced a heavy Calamity to come upon *Iſrael*, under the name of *Ephraim*, he comforts thoſe of *Judah*, under the name of the reſidue of his People. They not being ſo groſly corrupted as the other were, he ſtays them with this promiſe: In that day, ſaith he, when the other ſhall be overwhelmed, as with a Deluge, *The Lord of hoſts ſhall be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty unto the reſidue of his people.*

The promiſe is made up of three benefits, yet

yet the three are but one; or rather, one is all the three to them. *The Lord of hosts*; it is he, that shall be their *Honour*, *Wisdom* and *Strength*. *He shall be a crown*, &c. But first, a word of the Circumstance of time, *In that day*.

That Sovereign Lord, who at first set up the Lights of Heaven to distinguish times and seasons, by their constant motion, and likewise, by his Supream Providence, ruling the World, hath fixed the periods of States and Kingdoms, and decreed their Revolutions, their rising, ascending, and their height, with their decline and setting; hath by a special Providence determined those changes and vicissitudes that befall his Church. That which the Psalmist speaks, in his own particular, *Psal.* 31. 15. holds of each Believer, and of the Church, which they make up in all ages and places: *I said thou art my God, my times are in thy hand*; a sure and steady hand indeed, and therefore he builds his confidence upon it, *ver.* 13. *They took counsel against me, but I trusted in thee.* And upon this, he prays in faith That the face of God may shine upon him, and the Wicked may be ashamed.

Thus then, as many as are looking after a day of Mercy, to the Church of God, Pray and Believe upon this ground, That the time of it is neither in the frail hands of those that favour and seek it, nor in the hands of those that oppose it, how strong and subtile soever they be, but in that Almighty Hand, that doth

doth in Heaven and Earth what pleaſeth him. If he have ſaid, *now*, and *here*, will I give a day of refreſhment to my people that have long groaned for it, a day of the purity, and power of Religion. If, I ſay, this be his purpoſe, they muſt have ſomewhat more than Omnipotence that can hinder it, when his appointed time comes, to make a day of deliverance dawn upon his Church, after their long Night, either of affliction, or of defection, or both; they that contrive againſt that day-ſpring, are as vain, as if they would ſit down to Plot how to hinder the Sun from riſing in the Morning: And they that let go their hopes of it, becauſe of great apparent difficulties, that interpoſe betwixt their eye, and the accompliſhment of that work, they are as weak as if they ſhould imagine, when miſts and thick vapours appear about the Horizon in the morning, that theſe could hinder the riſing of the Sun, which is ſo far out of their reach, and *comes forth as a bridegroom, and rejoyces as a mighty man to run his race*, ſays *David*. Thoſe miſts may, indeed, hinder his clear appearance, and keep it from the eye for a time; but Reaſon tells us, even then, that they cannot ſtop his courſe. And Faith aſſures us no leſs in the other, That no difficulties can hold back God's day, and work of mercy, to his people. But you'll ſay, All the difficulty is to know whether the appointed time be near or not: 'Tis true, we have no particular Prophecies to aſſure us, but certainly

tainly when God awakes his Children, and makes them riſe, this is a probable ſign that it is near day: I mean, when he ſtirs them up to more than uſual Hopes, and Prayers, and Endeavours, it is very likely that he intends them ſome ſpecial good; but yet more, when he himſelf is ariſen (as it pleaſeth him to ſpeak) that is, when he is begun to appear, in a more than ordinary manner, of working by ſingular and wonderful footſteps of Providence. This is, no doubt, a ſign that he will go on to ſhew remarkable mercy to *Sion*, and that the time to favour her, yea, the ſet time is come, *Pſ.* 102. 13.

Howſoever then, let the wonderful workings of the Lord move thoſe of you, that have any power and opportunity, to be now (if ever) active, for the greateſt good, both of the preſent Age, and of Poſterity; and you that can be no other way uſeful, yet you ſhall be no ſmall helpers if you be much in Prayer; let both your hopes and your fears ſerve to ſharpen your Prayers: Be not too much dejected with any diſcouragement, neither be ye carnally lift up with outward appearances, for the heart of him that is lifted up, is not upright in him, *Hab.* 2. 3. *But live, as the juſt do, by your faith*, and if the deferring of your hopes ſhould ſicken your hearts (as *Solomon* ſpeaks) yet ſtay and comfort them with the Cordial of the Promiſes. This you are ſure of, you have God's own word engaged for it, that in thoſe latter days *Babylon* ſhall be brought to the duſt,

and

and the true Church of Chriſt ſhall flouriſh and increaſe; and this Viſion is for appointed time (as *Habak.* ſays of his) at the end it ſhall ſpeak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, it will ſurely come, it will not tarry.

In that day] In the day of *Ephraims* or *Iſraels* Calamity, denounced in the former verſes; which, as moſt do conceive, was when the *Aſſyrian* oppreſt them, and in the end, led them Captive, in the Reign of *Hoſea*, as you have the Hiſtory of it, 2 *Kings*, 17. At which time *Hezekiah* was King of *Judah*, as you find in the following Chapter; and in that notable Reformation wrought by him, with thoſe bleſſings that followed upon it, is found the accompliſhment of this promiſe to *Judah*, *In that day*, &c. The parallel of God's different dealing with theſe two Kingdoms, at the time there ſpecified (*in that day*) does afford divers Leſſons, which might be here not impertinently taken notice of. Only this,

Though *Judah* alſo had its own corruptions, when *Hezekiah* came to the Crown, yet it pleaſed the Lord to ſpare them, and work a peaceable Reformation, making *Iſraels* puniſhment their warning. Truly, that Nation with whom the Lord deals thus graciouſly, is vilely ingrate if they obſerve it not with much humility and thankfulneſs, and with profit too. If the Lord ſhould anſwer your deſires and hopes with a Reformation, in a peaceable way, and ſhould yet lengthen out your long continued peace, and ſhould make this

this little past shaking of it, cause it to take root the faster; if he should, I say, do this, where would ye find fit praises for such a wonder of Mercy, especially considering, that in the mean while, he hath made other Reformed-Churches Fields of Blood, and made, as it were, the sound of their stripes preach Repentance to us? But certainly, if the hearing the voice of the Rod prevail not, we shall feel the smart of it, as this people of *Judah* did afterwards, because they were not so wise as to become wiser and better by *Israels* Folly and Calamity. We are expecting great things at our Lord's hands, and our provocations and sins against him are great; yet there is none of them all puts us in so much danger of disappointment, as Impenitency, Were there more Repentance, and personal Reformation amongst us, we might take it as a hopeful fore-runner of that publick Reformation which so many seem now to desire.

The Lord of hosts] This stile of his, you know is frequent in the Prophets, in their Predictions of Mercy and Judgment, intimating both his Greatness and Majesty, and his Supream Power, for accomplishing his Word. No created Power can resist him; yea, all must serve him. The most excellent Creatures can have no greater honour: The greatest are not exempted, nor the meanest excluded from serving him. In the 12. of the *Acts*, 23. you find one of the noblest Creatures, and a number of the Vilest, made use of at the same time

time, in the ſame ſervice. Becauſe *Herod* did accept of the Sacriledge of the People, and gave not back to this Lord of Hoſts his own glory, *The Angel of the Lord ſmote him*, and the Vermine devoured him. And in *Egypt*, you know, the employing of the deſtroying Angel, and what variety of Hoſts, this Lord of Hoſts, did employ to plague them. What madneſs then is it, to oppoſe and encounter this great General; even in doubtful caſes, to run on blindly, without examining, leſt peradventure a Man ſhould be found a fighter againſt God? And on the other ſide, it's great weakneſs to admit any fear under his Banner. If a Man could ſay, when he was told of the multitude of the Ships the Enemy had, *againſt how many do you reckon me*, how much more juſtly may we reckon, this Lord of Hoſts, againſt multitudes of Enemies, how great ſoever? *They are to him as the drop of a bucket, and the ſmalleſt duſt of the ballance*; 'tis ignorance and mean thoughts, of this mighty Lord, that makes his enemies ſo confident; and it is the ſame evil, in ſome degree, or at the beſt, forgetfulneſs of his Power, that cauſeth diffidence in his followers, *Iſa.* 51. 12, 13. Now the ſame Lord of Hoſts, you know, is likewiſe called the God of Peace; he is, indeed, *& pace & bello inſignis.* The bleſſing of Peace, and the ſucceſs of War, are both from him; and to him alone is due the praiſe of both.

πρὸς πόσας με ἀντε ἅπαξ εἰς.

Shall be a Crown, &c.] He ſhall dignifie and adorn them by his ſpecial preſence; to wit,

In

In the purity of his Ordinances, and Religion, amongſt them; the profeſſion, and flouriſhing of that, ſhall be their ſpecial glory and beauty. For as the other two benefits concern their civil good, Juſtice flouriſhing within, and Wealth, and Opulency from without, ſo doubtleſs, this firſt, *this glory* and *beauty*, is Religion, as the chiefeſt of the three, and the other two are its attendants. In the 26 *Pſ. ver.* 8. The Sanctuary, the place of their ſolemn Worſhip, is called *The place where God's honour dwelleth*, or the Tabernacle of his honour. And *Pſalm* 96. 9. The *glorious Sanctuary*, or the *beauty of holineſs*. And the Ark of God, you know, was called *the glory*. *The glory is departed from Iſrael*, (ſaid the Wife of *Phineas*) *for the ark of God is taken*. Pure Religion, and a pure Worſhip, is the glory of God amongſt his People, and conſequently, *their* glory. Now referring this Propheſie to *Hezekiah*'s time, the accompliſhment of it is evident, in that work of Reformation, whereof you have the full Hiſtory, 2 *Chron.* 29. 30, 31, *&c.*

If it be thus, that the purity of Religion, and Worſhip, is the Crown and Glory of a People; and therefore, on the other ſide, that their deepeſt ſtain of Diſhonour and Vileneſs, is the vitiating of Religion with humane Devices; then to contend for the Preſervation, or the Reformation of it, is noble, and worthy of a Chriſtian. 'Tis for the Crown of Jeſus Chriſt, which is likewiſe a

Crown

Crown of Glory, and Diadem of Beauty to them, he being their Head; it is indeed, the true glory both of Kings and their Kingdoms. Labour then for conſtancy in this work; let no man take your Crown from you; you know how buſie the Emiſſaries of the Church of *Rome* have been to take it from us, or, at leaſt, to pick the Diamonds out of it, and put in falſe counterfeit ones in their places, I mean, they ſtole away the power of Religion, and fill'd up the room with ſhadows and fopperies of their own deviſing. 'Tis the Vanity of that Church, to think they adorn the Worſhip of God when they dreſs it up with ſplendor in her ſervice, which ſome magnifie ſo much, yet may moſt truly be called a gliſtering Slavery and Captivity. Then is ſhe truly free, and wears her Crown, when the Ordinances of God are conformable to his own appointment. It is Vanity in Man, I ſay, when they dreſs it up with multitude of gaudy Ceremonies, and make it the ſmalleſt part of it ſelf, whereas, indeed, its true glory conſiſts not in pomp, but in purity and ſimplici y. *Apoc.* 12. We find the Church, under the name of a Woman, richly attired indeed, but her ornaments be all heavenly, the Sun her cloathing, and her Crown of twelve Stars; needs ſhe then borrow ſublunary glory? No, ſhe treads upon it, the Moon is under her feet. There is another Woman, indeed, in that ſame Book, arrayed in Purple and Scarlet, deckt

with Gold and precious Stones, and having a Golden Cup in her Hand, but that Golden Cup is full of Abominations and Filthineſs, and ſhe her ſelf the Mother of Abominations, *Apoc.* 17. 4. The Natural Man judges according to his reach, but to a Spiritual Eye there is a moſt genuine beauty in the Service of God, and Government of his Houſe, and when they are neareſt to the Rule, the Word of God, then is it, that the Lord himſelf is the Crown and Diadem of his Church.

A Crown, &c.] Again we conſider this perſonally, as belonging in particular to every Believer. They are all *made Kings and Prieſts unto God the Father*, Revel 1. 6. *They are a choſen generation, a royal prieſthood*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. how deſpicable ſoever to the World. This is their dignity: *The Lord is their crown and diadem*; he ſubdues their Luſt, and makes them Kings over their own Affections, and more than Conquerors over all Troubles and Perſecutions, whereas carnal Men are continually hurried like Slaves, unto baſe employments, ſtill kept toyling in the ignoble ſervice of their own Luſts. They think, indeed, it is their Liberty, but that's a baſeneſs of Spirit, that complies ſo well with ſo Vile and Servile a condition. And whereas they judge the godly to be the refuſe and droſs of the Earth, and the proper objects of Contempt, this is becauſe this their Crown, though moſt glorious, is inviſible to the Eye of Nature. *The Lord is a Crown*: If they knew what this is, they

they would ſee enough in it to countervail their outward meanneſs, and the reproaches the World caſts on them, as the Apoſtle St. *Peter* hath it, 1 *Ep. cap.* 4. 14. If *ye be reproached for the name of Chriſt, happy are ye, for the ſpirit of Glory and of God reſteth on you*: He is their *Crown.*

And obſerve, how this Crown is oppoſed to that blaſted glory, and fading Crown of pride, ſpoken of in the former verſes.

Who is there that ſees not, in daily Experience, the Vanity and Inconſtancy of worldly glory, and yet how few are there that wean themſelves from it, and learn to diſdain it? Still men dote upon that which is not, upon a ſhadow, a nothing. But would you have a Glory that fadeth not, a Garland that cannot wither, make the Lord your *Crown* and *your Glory*, and if he be ſo, glory in him and in nothing elſe; *Let not the wiſe man glory*, &c. *but let*, &c. *Jer.* 9. 23.

You that are Noble aſpire to this Crown, as being ſo far above your periſhing Honours and bounded Powers; and you that are outwardly meaner and lower, ſee how little cauſe you have to complain of your condition, ſeeing you are not debarred from this beſt and greateſt honour. And that you may diſcern it aright what it is, know that it conſiſts in the renovation of God's Image within you, which is in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs: So the Lord becomes your Crown in the Kingdom of Grace, and by this you may diſcover

whether or no you have attained it, if you can yet delight to wallow in the puddle and pleasures of Sin, you are far from this royal condition; but if you find your Soul poſſeſſed with the love of Holineſs, and that you are trampling upon prophane delights, this may perſwade you that God hath enabled you, and crowned you with his Grace, and will crown you with Glory. Again, try it by this; if the Lord is become your Crown and your Glory, you will glory in him, and in nothing elſe. Though you be Wiſe, you will not glory in your Wiſdom, nor in Strength, nor in Riches, nor Honours, though you had them all; but if you glory, you will glory; in the Lord. And withal, your higheſt joy will be to ſee the advancement of his Glory; and, if you can, to be any way ſerviceable to the advancing of it.

And a Spirit of Judgment, &c.] Both to theſe that ſit in Judgment, and to the People, for Juſtice is the ſtrongeſt Baſe and Eſtabliſhment of Authority; and withal, the influence of it is moſt ſweet and comfortable to theſe that are under Authority, and where it is wanting, that order and relation of Superiours and Inferiours, which God hath appointed, in the Societies of Men, for their good, tends exceedingly to the damage of both. And therefore, where God intendeth to continue the Peace and Welfare of a People, he is liberal in pouring out much of this Spirit of Judgment, on theſe that ſit in Judgment.

ment. On the contrary, it is for a heavy puniſhment when he withdraws his Spirit from Rulers, and leaves them wholly to the Corruption and Vanity of their own Spirits.

That ſit in Judgment] To all that are in place of Authority and Judicature, from the Supream to the loweſt Magiſtrate; for this concerns them all, for they be all raiſed in their Subordination, and ſeveral places above the people, for the benefit and good of the people as the Stars, that be ſet ſo high, yet are placed there to be uſeful and beneficial to the Inferiour World.

Now this Spirit of Judgment comprehends in it, both due Wiſdom and Prudence, for the trial and right judging of affairs, and for the diſcerning betwixt ſound and perverſe Counſel; and withal a judgment practically good, that cannot be byaſs'd from the ſtraight line of Equity and Juſtice by any ſiniſter reſpect.

Now ſeeing the Spirit of Judgment is from the Lord, yea, he is this Spirit; it ought to perſwade thoſe that ſit in Judgment, to entreat and pray for this, and to depend upon it, and beware of Self-confidence. *Truſt in the Lord*, ſaith *Solomon*, *and lean not to thine own underſtanding*; if you do, it will prove but a broken Reed. And as they that ſit in Judgment, ſhould intreat his Spirit by Prayer, ſo generally, all muſt ſhare with them in this duty, and make ſupplication for all that are in Authority over them, eſpecially in extra-

ordinary times. Truly, we have matter of thankfulneſs, that the Lord hath in ſome meaſure inclined the Royal Heart of our Sovereign to the deſires of his People, and ought ſtill to pray, That the Lord would give the King his Judgments. And then, as the Pſalmiſt adds, *The Mountains ſhall bring peace to the people, and the little Hills, by righteouſneſs,* Pſal. 72. 3. And for this end, let all that wiſh the publick, yea, their own good, pray much for abundance of this Spirit of Judgment to be conferred on them; your eyes and expectations are upon them. If you would enjoy the Lamp, you muſt pour in Oyl. This Spirit, indeed, you cannot pour upon them, but if you pour out many Prayers, you may draw it from above, he will give it, who here promiſes to be *a Spirit of Judgment.*

And ſtrength] Obſerve, the way to be powerful and ſucceſsful againſt Foreign Enemies, is, To have Religion and Juſtice flouriſhing at home; and truly, if it pleaſe our God, to anſwer the deſires of his People, at this time, it may ſo unite the affection and ſtrength of the two Kingdoms, (the Lord of Hoſts being their ſtrength) as to make them a Terror to their Enemies, whereas they were become a ſcorn and deriſion to them. For your particular, Labour to make the Lord your Glory, to have Chriſt made unto you, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *both wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification,* which are the glo-

ry

ry and beauty of the Soul, and redemption from your Spiritual Enemies; draw ſtrength from him, to fight and prevail againſt them, till after the ſhort Combat of this life, you obtain the Crown, and dwell in his preſence, where you ſhall fear no more aſſaults, neither of Sin nor Affliction, but ſhall be for ever happy in the bleſſed Viſion of his Face. *To him, be glory,* Amen.

SERMON,

SERMON. IV.

PREFACE.

EXternal worſhip doth openly acknowledge a Deity, but want of inward ſenſe in Worſhip ſecretly denieth it; *The Fool hath ſaid in his heart there is no God.* 'Tis ſtrange to hear ſo much noiſe of Religion in the World, and to find ſo little Piety. To preſent the living God with a carcaſs of lifeleſs Worſhip, is to pay him with ſhells of Services, and ſo to mock him. And it is a more admirable long-ſuffering in him to defer the puniſhment of ſuch Devotion, then all the other Sins in the World. The *Egyptian* Temples were rich and ſtately *Fabricks*. A Stranger, who had lookt upon them without, would have imagined ſome great Deity within; But if they entered (as *Lucian* ſays laughing at them) nothing was to be ſeen, but only ſome Ape, or Cat, or py'd Bull, or ſome other fine God like thoſe. To behold our fair ſemblance of Religion that frequent this houſe, it would appear that we were all the Temples of the Holy Ghoſt. But who ſo could look within us, would find in many of our hearts, Luſt, Pride, Avarice, or ſome ſuch like ſecret Vice

Vice adored as a God; and theſe are they that while our Bodies ſit here, do alienate our Souls from the Service of the Eternal God: So that we are either altogether ſenſeleſs and dead before him, or if any fit of Spiritual motion riſe within us, we find it here, and here we leave it, as if it were ſacriledge to take it home with us; But did once that Spirit of grace breath ſavingly upon our Souls, we ſhould ſtraight renounce and abhor thoſe baſe Idols, and then all the current of our affection would run more in this Channel; our Services would then be ſpiritual, and it would be our Heaven upon Earth to view God in his Sanctuary; and the obtaining of the change is and ſhould be one main end of this our meeting, and that it may be the happy effect of it our recourſe muſt be to the Throne of Grace by humble Prayer, *In the Name of our Mediator Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous.*

Iſaiah. LX. 1.

Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee.

ADmirable is the worth, and depth of Divine Providence; this either we know not, or at leaſt ſeldom remember; while we forget the wonders of Providence, we direct our thoughts to baſer objects, and think not on it; and while we forget the depth of Providence

vidence (if at any time we look towards it) we judge raſhly and think amiſs of it. If this be true of that general Providence whereby God rules the World, 'tis more true of his ſpecial Providence towards his Church. This is both the moſt excellent piece of it, and therefore beſt worth the reading, and alſo the hardeſt piece, and therefore it requires ſobriety in judging; above all other things he that ſuddenly judges in this, makes haſte to err; To have a right view of it, it muſt be taken altogether, and not by parcels: Pieces of rareſt Artifice, while they are a making, ſeem little worth, eſpecially to an unskilful eye, which being compleated, command admiration. *P. Martyr* ſays well, *De operibus Dei. Antequam actum, non eſt judicandum.* There is a time when the Daughters of *Sion* embrace the dunghil, and ſit deſolate in the Streets, as *Jeremiah* hath it in the *4th.* of his *Lam. verſe* 5. And at that ſame time the voice of *Babylon* is, *I ſit as a Queen, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow,* Iſa. 47. All is out of order here. But if we ſtay a while we ſhall ſee *Sion* and *Babylon* appointed to change ſeats, by the great Maſter of the World; *Come down* (ſays he) *Daughter of Babylon, and ſit in the duſt,* Iſa. 47. 2. And here to *Zion*; *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come, and the Glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee.* It is an entire Cataſtrophe, both Parties find a notable alteration together, That ſame hand that exalts the one, ruins the other. When the Sun riſes upon the Church, her Antipodes muſt needs

needs be covered with darkneſs. As we find it in the next *verſe* to the Text. *Darkneſs ſhall cover the Earth, and groſs Darkneſs the People, but the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his Glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee.*

The Prophet elevated by the Spirit of God to a view of after Ages, as clear as if preſent, ſeems here to find his people ſitting under the dark mantle of a ſad and tedious night, and having long expected the Suns return in vain, before its time, they give over expectation when its near them, and deſperately ſold themſelves to lie perpetually in the dark. Now the Prophet, as it were ſtanding awake upon ſome Mountain, perceives the day approaching, and the golden Chariots of the Morning of deliverance haſting forward, and ſeems to come ſpeedily with theſe glad news, to a Captive People, and ſounds this Trumpet in their Ears, *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come*, &c. The very manner of expreſſion is ſudden, and rouzing without a copulative, *Not ariſe and ſhine; But ariſe, ſhine*, &c.

The words have in them, a clear ſtamp of relation to a low poſture, and obſcure condition; They ſuppoſe a people lying, or ſitting without light; deep diſtreſs is that dark ſoil that beſt ſets off the luſtre of marvellous deliverances; and among many other reaſons of the Churches viciſſitudes, why may not this be one: The Lord is more illuſtrious in the World by that deep Wiſdom and great Power that ſhines when he raiſes and reſtores her from deſperate Afflictions, then if he had ſtill preſerved

ſerved her in conſtant eaſe, he ſeems ſometimes careleſs of her condition, and regardleſs of her groanes; but even then, is he waiting the moſt fit time to be gracious, as our Prophet ſpeaks: And when it is time, out of the baſeſt Eſtate he brings her forth more freſh, ſtrong, and beautiful than before. *Though you have lyen among the Pots, ye ſhall be as the Wings of a Dove covered with Silver, and her Feathers with yellow Gold*, Pſal. 68. 13. Do with the Church what you will, ſhe ſhall come through, and that with advantage, *Mergas profundo pulchrior exilit*, as one ſays of *Rome*, Keep the Church ſeventy years Captive, yet after that, *ſhe ſhall ariſe and ſhine more glorious then ever.*

But ſurely the ſtrain of this Evangelick Propheſie riſes higher than any temporal deliverance. Therefore we muſt riſe to ſome more ſpiritual ſenſe of it, not excluding the former. And that which ſome call divers ſenſes of the ſame Scripture, is indeed, but divers parts of one full ſenſe. This prophecy is out of queſtion, a moſt rich deſcription of the Kingdom of Chriſt under the Goſpel. And in this ſenſe, this invitation to *Ariſe* and *Shine* is mainly addreſt to myſtical *Jeruſalem*, yet not without ſome priviledge to literal *Jeruſalem* beyond other people. They are firſt invited to *Ariſe*, and *ſhine*, becauſe this Sun aroſe firſt in their *Horizon*. Chriſt came of the *Jews*, and came firſt to them. *The Redeemer ſhall come to* Zion, ſays our Prophet, in the former *Chapter*, but miſerable

miſerable *Jeruſalem* knew not the day of her Viſitation, nor the things that concerned her peace, and therefore are they now hid from her eyes: She delighted to deceive her ſelf with fancies of (I know not what) imaginary grandeur, and outward glory, to which the promiſed Meſſiah ſhould exalt her, and did, in that kind, particularly, abuſe this very Propheſie; ſo doteing upon a ſenſe groſly literal, ſhe forfeited the enjoyment of thoſe Spiritual Bleſſings that are here deſcribed. But undoubtedly, that people of the *Jews*, ſhall once more be commanded to ariſe and ſhine, and their return ſhall be the riches of the *Gentiles*; and that ſhall be a more glorious time than ever the Church of God did yet behold. Nor is there any inconvenience, if we think that the high expreſſions of this Propheſie have ſome ſpiritual reference to that time, ſince the great Doctor of the *Gentiles*, applies ſome words of the former Chapter to that purpoſe, *Rom.* 11. 29. They forget a main point of the Churches glory, that pray not daily for the *Jews* Converſion.

But to paſs that, and inſiſt on the Spiritual ſenſe of theſe words, as directed to the whole Church of Chriſt. They contain a powerful incitement to a twofold act, inforc'd (as I conceive) by one reaſon, under a twofold expreſſion, neither of them ſuperfluous, but each giving light to other, and ſuiting very aptly with the two words of command: *Ariſe, for the glory of the Lord is riſen, and ſhine, for thy light is come.*

I will not now ſubdivide theſe parts again, and cut them ſmaller, but will rather unite them again into this one Propoſition: *The coming and preſence of Chriſt, ingages all to whom he comes, to ariſe and ſhine.* In this propoſition, may be conſidered the nature of the duties, the univerſality of the ſubject, and the force of the reaſon. Firſt, the nature of the duties, *what it is to ariſe and ſhine.*

Ariſing hath either reference to a fall, or to ſome contrary poſture of ſitting, or lying; or to one of theſe two conditions, that are ſo like one another, Sleep, or Death; and to all theſe, Spiritually underſtood, may it here be referr'd. This is the voice of the Goſpel to the Sons of *Adam, Ariſe,* for in him they all *fell.* The firſt ſin of that firſt Man, was the great Fall of Mankind; it could not but undo us, it was from ſo high a Station. Our daily ſins are our daily falls, and they are the fruits of that great one. *Thou haſt fallen by thine iniquity,* ſays the Lord to his people, *Hoſea* 14. 1. for theſe poſtures of ſitting and lying, the Scripture makes uſe of them both, to ſignifie the ſtate of ſin. Says not St. *John, The world lies in wickedneſs,* 1 Joh. 5. 19? Are not the people ſaid to *ſit in darkneſs,* mentioned *Matth.* 4. 16? which is directly oppoſite to *Ariſe* and *Shine.* In the darkneſs of *Egypt,* it is ſaid, the people *ſate ſtill,* none aroſe from their places. In the groſs miſt of Corrupt Nature, Man cannot beſtir himſelf to any Spiritual action, but when this light is come, then he may, and ſhould ariſe.

No-

Now for Sleep and Death. Sin is moſt frequently repreſented, in Holy Writ, under their black Vizors. To forbear places where they are ſeverally ſo uſed, we ſhall find them jointly in one, *Eph.* 5. 14. *Ariſe thou that ſleepeſt, and ſtand up from the dead*; which place ſeems to have ſpecial alluſion to this very Text.

The impenitent Sinner is as one buried in ſleep; his Soul is in darkneſs, fit for ſleep, and loves to be ſo. That he may ſleeep the ſounder, he ſhuts all the paſſages of light, as enemies to his reſt; and ſo, by cloſe Windows and Curtains, makes an artificial Night to himſelf within; not a beam appears there, though without, the clear day of the Goſpel ſhines round about him. The ſenſes of his Soul, as we may call them, are all bound up, and are not exerciſed to diſcern good and evil, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 5. 14. And his leading faculty, his underſtanding, is ſurcharged with ſleepy Vapors, that ariſe inceſſantly from the inferiour part of his Soul, his perverſe affections, nor hath his mind any other exerciſe, in this ſleepy condition, but the vain buſineſs of dreaming; his moſt refined, and wiſeſt thoughts, are but meer extravagancies from Man's due end, and his greateſt contentments nothing but Golden Dreams, yet he is ſerious in them, and no wonder, for who can diſcern the folly of his own Dream till he is awake? He that Dreams he eateth, when he awakes finds his Soul empty, and not till then, *Iſa.* 29. 8.

Now

Now while he thus ſleeps, his great buſineſs lyes by, yet ſpends he his hand-breadth of time as faſt, while he is faſt aſleep, as if he were in continual employment; judge then if it be not needful to bid this Man *Ariſe*.

Laſtly, This voice may import that Man is Spiritually Dead. God is the life of the Soul, as it is of the Body; while he dwells there, its both comely and active, but once deſtitute of his preſence, becomes a Carcaſs, where, beſides privation of life and motion, there is a poſitive filthineſs, a putrefaction in the Soul, unſpeakably worſe than that of dead Bodies, *Corruptio optimi peſſima*. And as dead Bodies are removed from the ſight of Men, dead Souls are caſt out from the favourable ſight of God, till Chriſt's ſaying *Ariſe*, revive them. The Miniſters of the Word are appointed to cry, *Ariſe*, indifferently to all that hear them; and Chriſt hath reſerved this priviledge and liberty, to joyn his effective voice, when, and to whom he pleaſes. A carnal Man may ſhew his Teeth at this, but who is he that can, by any ſolid reaſon, charge abſurdity upon this way of diſpenſing outward and inward Vocation? I will not here mention their idle Cavils, the Scripture is undeniably clear in theſe, That Man is naturally dead in Sin. The Goſpel bids him *Ariſe*, and it is Chriſt that is his life, and that raiſes him. Thus we ſee, in ſome meaſure, what it is for Men to *Ariſe*. Now being riſen they muſt *Shine*, and that two ways, jointly and publickly, as they make

up

up visible Churches; and likewise personally, in their particular Conversation. First then, What is the shining of the true Church? Doth not a Church then shine, when Church Service is raised from a decent and primitive Simplicity, and decored with Pompous Ceremonies, with rich Furniture, and gaudy Vestments? Is not the Church then Beautiful? Yes, indeed, but all the question is whether this be the proper genuine beauty or no; whether this be not strange fire, as the fire that *Aarons* Sons used which became vain, and was taken as strange fire. Methinks it cannot be better decided, then to refer it to St. *John* in his Book of the *Revelations*. We find there the Descriptions of two several Women, the one riding in State, arrayed in Purple, deckt with Gold and precious Stones and Pearl, *Rev.* 17. 3. The other in rich attire too, but of another kind, Cloathed with the Sun, and a Crown of twelve Stars on her head; the others decorement was all Earthly, this Womans is all celestial; what need she borrow Light and Beauty, from precious Stones that's Cloathed with the Sun, and Crowned with Stars; she wears no sublunary Ornaments, but, which is more noble, she treads upon them, the Moon is under her Feet; now if you know (as you do all without doubt) which of these two is the Spouse of Christ, you can easily resolve the question. The truth is, those things seem to deck Religion, but they undo it. Observe where they are most used, and we shall find

Chap. 12.

little or no ſubſtance of Devotion under them, as we ſee in that Apoſtate Church of *Rome*. This Painting is diſhonourable for Chriſt's Spouſe, and beſides, it ſpoils her natural Complexion. The ſuperſtitious uſe of Torches and Lights in the Church by day, is a kind of ſhining, but ſurely not commanded here. No it is an affront done both to the Sun in the Heaven, and to the Sun of Righteouſneſs in the Church.

אוֹרִי What is meant then when the Church is Commanded to ſhine or be enlightened. Theſe two readings give the entire ſenſe of the word; firſt for having no light of her ſelf, ſhe muſt receive light, and then ſhew it, be enlightened and then ſhine; ſhe is enlightened by Chriſt the Sun of Righteouſneſs, ſhining in the Sphere of the Goſpel. *This is that Light that comes to her, and the Glory of the Lord that ariſes upon her*; hence ſhe receives her Laws and Form of Government, and her ſhining is briefly the pure exerciſe of thoſe, and conformity to them.

And the perſonal ſhining of the ſeveral Members of a Church, is a comely congruity with pure worſhip and diſcipline, and it is that which now is moſt needful to be urged, every Chriſtian Soul is perſonally engaged firſt to be enlightened and then to ſhine, and we muſt draw our Light for our ſelves, from that ſame ſource that furniſhes the Church with her publick Light. There is a word in the Civil Law, *Uxor fulget radiis mariti*, the Wife ſhines

ſhines by the rays of her Husbands Light. Now every faithful Soul is eſpouſed to Chriſt and therefore may well ſhine, ſeeing the Sun himſelf is their Husband; he adorns them with a double Beauty of Juſtification and Sanctification: By *that*, they ſhine more eſpecially to God, by *this* to Men; And may not theſe two be ſignified by a double Character given to the Spouſe in the *Cant.* 6. 20. *She is fair as the Moon, and clear as the Sun*; The leſſer Light is that of Sanctification, *Fair as the Moon*; That of Juſtification the greater, by which, *She is as clear as the Sun:* The Sun is perfectly Luminous, but the Moon is but half enlightened; ſo the Believer is perfectly juſtified but ſanctified only in part, his one half, his fleſh, is dark, and as the partial illumination is the reaſon of ſo many changes in the Moon to which changes the Sun is not ſubject at all, ſo the imperfection of a Chriſtians holineſs, is the cauſe of ſo many waxings, and waneings, and great inequality in his performances, whereas in the mean while his Juſtification remains conſtantly like it ſelf. *This* is imputed, *that* inherent. The Light of Sanctification, muſt begin in the underſtanding and from thence, be transfuſed to the affection, the inferiour parts of the Soul, and from thence break forth and ſhine into Action. This is then the nature of the Duties, *Ariſe and Shine.*

The Univerſality of the ſubject which was the ſecond head, is this. That every Man

that knows Christ, is here engaged to shine too; neither grandeur exempts from the duty of shining, nor doth meanness exclude from the priviledge of shining; Men of low condition in this World need not despair of it, for it is a spiritual Act, great Men need not despise it for it is a noble Act to shine by Christ's Light. In the 3 *verse* of this *Chap.* it is said to the Church. *Kings shall come to the brightness of thy rising.* To what end, but to partake of her Light, and shine with her. And indeed the regal attire of Christ's Righteousness, and the white Robes of Holiness, will exceeding well become Kings and Princes. *Give the King thy Judgements, O Lord, and thy Righteousness to the King's Son.*

The Third, and Last thing propounded was, the force of the reason, that Christ's presence engages to *Arise and shine*, wherein it is supposed that Christ declared in the Gospel, is the Light which is said here to come, and the Glory of the Lord which is said to be risen; so that now, it should be more amply cleared, how Christ is Light, and the Glory of the Lord, and what his coming and rising is, but of these afterwards. I shall close now with a word of exhortation.

Arise then, for the Glory of the Lord is risen, The day of the Gospel is too precious, that any of it should be spent in sleep or idleness, or worthless business; worthless business detains many of us; *Arise immortal Souls from moyling in the dust,* and working in the Clay like *Egyptian*

Egyptian captives. Addreſs your ſelves to more noble work; there is a Redeemer come, that will pay your ranſome, and reſcue you from ſuch vile ſervice, for more excellent employment. It is ſtrange, how the Souls of Chriſtians, can ſo much forget their firſt original from Heaven, and their new hopes of returning thither, and the Rich price of their Redemption, and forgetting all theſe, dwell ſo low, and dote ſo much upon triffles, how is it that they hear not their well beloved's voice crying, *Ariſe my love, my fair one, and come away*? Though the eyes of true Believers are ſo inlightened, that they ſhall not ſleep unto death, yet their ſpirits are often ſeized with a kind of drowſineſs, and ſlumber, and ſometimes even then, when they ſhould be of moſt activity. The time of Chriſt's check to his three Diſciples made it very ſharp, tho' the words are mild, *What? could you not watch with me one hour*? Shake off, believing Souls, that heavy humour. Ariſe, and ſatiate the eye of faith with the contemplation of Chriſt's Beauty and follow after him, till you attain the place of full enjoyment. And you others that never yet ſaw him, *Ariſe*, and admire his matchleſs excellency. The things you eſteem great, are but ſo through ignorance of his greatneſs; his brightneſs, if you ſaw it, would obſcure to you the greateſt ſplendor of the World, as all thoſe Stars that go never down upon us, yet they are ſwallowed up in the ſurpaſſing light of the Sun when it ariſes; *Stand up from the*

dead, and he ſhall give you light? Ariſe and work while it is Day, for the Night ſhall come wherein none can work, ſays our Saviour himſelf: Happy are they that ariſe early in the Morning of their youth, for the day of Life is very ſhort, and the art of Chriſtianity long and difficult, is it not a grievous thing, that Men never conſider why they came into the World, till they be upon the point of going out again? Nor think how to live, till they be ſummoned to die. But moſt of all unhappy he, that never wakens out of that pleaſing dream of falſe happineſs, till he fall into Eternal miſery, *Ariſe* then betimes, and prevent this ſad awakening.

And being riſen, put on your beautiful Garments *Iſaiah* 52. 1. Draw towards you with the hand of Faith, the rich Mantle of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs. 'Tis time to awake, ſays the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 13. 11. *v.* And preſently after, *Put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And it is a wonder, how a Sinner can reſt, while he is out of this Garment, for there is no other in Heaven, nor Earth can make him ſhine to God, and ſo ſhelter him from the ſtroke of Juſtice; put him on then, and ſo ſhine; being thus Cloathed, thou ſhalt ſhine in Juſtification, and likewiſe in Sanctity; What a priviledge is it to be like God; A ſanctified conſcience, what can be ſaid againſt it? And firſt have an enlightned underſtanding, for that is the proper ſeat of Light, that ignorant zeal that *Rome* commends, expoſes Religion to ſcorn and

and contempt; Heat without Light, is the Character of the fire of Hell, I know all are not tied to a like degree of knowledge, but certainly all are obliged to have a competency, and diligence for increaſe; aſpire then to be intelligent Chriſtians, and to know well what you believe; Let your minds be filled with knowledge, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks. But let it not ſtop there, it muſt have influence into the will, *Lux eſt vehiculum caloris*, true Light conveys heat: All the knowledge that the natural Man hath of Chriſt, not warming his affection to Chriſt, is but *ignis fatuus*, a vain Light, it ſhall never lead him to happineſs. Saving Light produces love, and by that acts: Faith works by Love, ſays the Apoſtle. That breaks forth and ſhines in the Life, in Godlineſs, Righteouſneſs, and Sobriety. Shine then in all theſe, firſt in Piety towards God, for this is the reflection of theſe rays of Light back toward their ſource. And this will command the other two; No Man that ſhines in Godlineſs, will wallow in injuſtice, and intemperance; Guile and Wrong cannot indure the Light; they that are unjuſt cannot ſhine; and let them never offer to ſhine among Chriſtians that are not ſober, but ſtained with Riot and Uncleanneſs. Theſe foul enormities lay waſte the Conſcience, and put out the Light, how can any ſeed of Grace ſubſiſt undrowned, that are expoſed to a daily deludge of Cups? How can that pure Spirit, that choſe the likeneſs of a chaſt Dove, dwell, and give Light

in that Soul that is a Neſt of impure and filthy luſts? No, There can be no fellowſhip betwixt this celeſtial Light, whereby we ſhould ſhine, and thoſe infernal works of darkneſs. Let prophane Men hold it a chief ſtrain of wit to ſcoffe at purity, but you that pretend Heaven ward in good earneſt, and mean to ſhine in glory, ſhine here in holineſs; *For without holineſs no Man ſhall ſee God.* And do it with thoſe qualifications (1) Conſtantly in every eſtate, let not this Divine Light go out neither by day, in proſperity, nor by night in Adverſity; in every place do not ſhine clear, and be dark in your Chamber. They that do thus, have their reward: that's a ſad word if rightly underſtood, beware of Hypocriſie. Again ſhine progreſſively, gaining ſtill more and more victory over darkneſs, till you attain unmixt and perfect Light. The way of the juſt, ſays *Solomon, Is like the ſhining Light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect Day,* Prov. 4. 18. Laſtly, Shine humbly to his glory, whoſe Light you borrow, not to ſhew forth your own excellencies, but his, *Who hath called you from Darkneſs to his marvellous Light,* 1. *Pet.* 2. 9. If we be Children of Light, our brightneſs muſt praiſe the Father of Lights: *Let your Light ſo ſhine before Men, that they ſeeing your good works,* not your ſelves if you can be hid; (as the Sun affords its Light and will ſcarce ſuffer us to look upon it ſelf) *may glorifie* (*not you but*) *your Heavenly Father,* *Math.* 5. 6. To conclude.

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The pure Light of the Church is revived, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon you, and upon this glory there ſhall be a defence: If God be your glory in the midſt of you, he will be likewiſe a wall of fire round about you. All the danger is, if we fall ſhort in the duty of ſhining, but as you deſire that this glory ſhould abide and dwell amongſt you, let all Eſtates of Men provoke one another to ſhine bright in holineſs; you who either by Birth or Office, are in eminent ſtation, know that you were ſet there to be eminent and exemplary in ſhining, as Stars of more notable magnitude; you who are Miniſters of this Light, know that you are the Light of the World, and if the very Light become darkneſs, how great will that darkneſs be? you that are of a lower order know that you muſt ſhine too: For it is a common duty. There is a certain company of ſmall Stars in the Firmament, which though they cannot be each one ſeverally ſeen, yet being many, their united Light makes a conſpicuous brightneſs in the Heaven, which is called the milky way; ſo though the ſhining of every private Chriſtian is not ſo much ſeverally remarkable, yet the concourſe and meeting of their Light together, will make a bright path of holineſs ſhine in the Church.

Now to the end we may each one ſhine in our meaſure, we muſt learn to turn our ſelves often towards him from whom our Light is derived; Converſing with him, will make us more

more and more like him. There is a ſecret unknown vertue for this purpoſe in ſecret Prayer and Meditation; were we more in the Mount with God, our faces would ſhine more with Men, let us then reſcue from the World all the time we can, to reſort frequently thither till ſuch time as the Soul, which is now often pulled down again by the Fleſh, ſhall let that Mantle fall and come down no more: *But ſhine there without ſpot, and be for ever ſatisfied with her makers Image.*

SERMON,

SERMON V.

PREFACE.

ART imitates Nature, and the nearer it comes to Nature in its effects, it is the more Excellent. Grace is the new Nature of a Christian, and Hypocrisie that Art that counterfeits it, and the more exquisite it is in Imitation, it is the more plausible to Men, but the more abominable to God; it may frame a Spiritual Man in Image so to the life, that not only others, but even the Hypocrite himself may admire it, and favouring his own Artifice, may be deceived so far, as to say, and to think, it lives, and fall in love with it, but he is no less abhorred, by the Searcher of hearts, than pleasing to himself. Surely this mischief of Hypocrisie can never be enough inveighed against. When Religion is in request, its the chief malady of the Church, and numbers dye of it, though because its a subtile and inward Evil it be little perceived. Its to be feared, there are many sick of it that look well and comely in God's outward Worship, and they may pass well in good Weather, in times of Peace, but days of Adversity are days of Trial. The prosperous Estate of the Church makes Hypocrites, and her Distress discovers them, but if they escape such trial, there is

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one inevitable day coming, wherein all ſecret things ſhall be made manifeſt. Men ſhall be turn'd inſide out, and amongſt all Sinners that ſhall then be brought before that Judgment Seat, the deformedſt ſight ſhall be an unmasked Hypocrite, and the heavieſt ſentence ſhall be his Portion.

Oh! That the conſideration of this would ſcare us out of that falſe diſguiſe in time, and ſet us all upon the ſtudy of Sincerity; precious is that Grace in God's eſteem, a little of it will weigh down Mountains of formal Religion, in the Ballance of the Sanctuary. Which of us have not now brought Hypocriſie, more or leſs, into this Houſe of God? Oh! that it were not with intention to nouriſh it, but with deſire to be here cured of it, for, he alone, that hates it ſo much, can cure it; he alone can confer upon us that ſincerity, wherein he mainly delights. If we have a mind, indeed, to be indued with it, it is no where elſe to be had, we muſt intreat it of God by humble Prayer, in the name of his Well-beloved Son, by the aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit.

Iſaiah LX. 1. Second Sermon.

Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee.

TRuly, *light is ſweet, and it is a pleaſing thing to behold the Sun*, ſays the Preacher, *Eccleſ.*

Eccleſ. 11. 7. But the interchange of Night with Day, adds to its beauty, and the longeſt Night makes Day the welcomeſt, as that People well knows, whoſe ſcituation in the World gives them a five or ſix months Night all of one piece. It is reported of ſome of them, That when they conceive their Night draws towards an end, they put on their richeſt Apparel, and climb up to the higheſt Mountains, with emulation, who ſhall firſt diſcover the returning light, which, ſo ſoon as it appears, they Salute, with Acclamations of Joy, and welcom it with ſolemn Feaſting, and all other Teſtimonies of exceeding gladneſs. But ſuch is the Lethargy of ſinful Man, that he ſtirs not to meet his Spiritual Light, and which is worſe, when it comes upon him, it finds him in love with Darkneſs; inſtead of his ſhouts of Joy for this Light, many a cry muſt be ſounded in his Ears, to awaken him, and it is well too, if at length, he hear and obey this Voice, *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come*, &c. It is clear that the words contain a Command, and the Reaſon of it: The Command to a twofold act, The Reaſon under two Expreſſions, proportionately different. Good reaſon the Church ſhould ariſe, when the Lord's Glory is riſen upon her; and it is very congruous, ſhe ſhould be enlightned and ſhine when her light is come. Of thoſe two Acts or Duties, ſomewhat was formerly ſpoken, and the reaſon, likewiſe, was made uſe of ſo far, as relative to thoſe Duties, and

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tending to their inforcement. But the meaning of the Phraſes, in which the Reaſon is expreſt, was rather, at that time, ſuppoſed, then either duly proved or illuſtrated, ſo that it will be now expedient to conſider, ſimply in themſelves, theſe latter words: *Thy light is come*, &c.

So far as this Propheſie hath reſpect to the reduction of the *Jews*, from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity; that Temporal Deliverance, and enſuing Peace and Proſperity, was their Light, and that Divine Power by which it was effected, was this Glory of the Lord. And indeed, both theſe expreſſions are frequently uſed, in ſuch a ſenſe in Holy Writ: *When I waited for light there came darkneſs*, ſays *Job*, in his 30 Chapter, 26 ver. So *Iſaiah* 58.20, and many other places. And the Glory of the Lord, for a ſingular effect of his Power, *Joh.* 11. 40. *Iſa.* 60. 18. and elſewhere. But this literal ſenſe is but a ſtep to elevate the Prophet to a ſight of Chriſt's Spiritual Kingdom, which is uſual with him, as our Saviour himſelf teſtifies, of another of his Propheſies. Theſe things, ſaid *Eſaias*, when he ſaw his Glory, and ſpoke of him, *Joh.* 12. 41. It was a ſight of that ſame Glory, that makes him ſay, *Thy light was true*, &c.

In theſe words, there are three things, concerning Chriſt, repreſented to the Churches view. Firſt, His Beauty and Excellency, in that he is called *light*, and *the glory of the Lord*. Secondly, The Churches Propriety and

and Intereſt in him, *Thy light*, and *riſen upon thee*, which hath a reſtrictive Emphaſis, as the very next verſe doth clearly manifeſt; as he is *originally* the Glory of the Lord, and the Light of the Lord, *Lumen de lumine*, ſo he is *Communicatively* the Churches light and her Glory too, as it is expreſt in the 19*th. verſe* of this ſame Chapter, *Thy God, thy Glory*. Thus hath ſhe both his worth, and her own right, in him, to conſider. Thirdly, His Preſence, or her actual Poſſeſſion, *He is come, and is riſen*; and in theſe the Church, and each faithful Soul, may find a double Spring of Affection, the one of Love, the other of Joy: The tranſcendent Beauty of Chriſt makes him the choiceſt object of Love, and her Property in him, or Title to him, together with Poſſeſſion, is the proper Cauſe of ſolid Joy:

Firſt then, this Excellency is expreſt by theſe two Characters, *light*, and *the glory of the Lord*. Concerning which, it will be fit both to demonſtrate that they are the proper Titles of Chriſt, and here to be taken for him; as alſo, to ſhew what they ſignifie in him.

Indeed, the Apoſtle in his ſecond Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, 3 Chapter, inſiſts much in extolling both the light and the glory of the Goſpel. And in the 4*th. verſe* of the next Chapter, ſpeaks of the light of the Glorious Goſpel, but he immediately imitates whence it hath this Light and Glory; *the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt*, ſays he, who is the Image of God: So that it is moſt unneceſſary to enquire whether

whether the Meſſiah, or the Word that reveals him, be rather here couched under theſe terms of *Light* and *the Glory of the Lord.* Theſe two agree ſo well altogether, and theſe words agree ſo well to them both, that it were an injury to attempt to ſever them: All the difference will be this, Chriſt is that incomplex and ſubſtantial Light, The Goſpel that complex Light, wherein he appears; but (not to be guilty of *dark* terms, eſpecially in a diſcourſe of *Light*) I take it in this reſemblance, Chriſt is the Sun, and the Goſpel his proper Sphere, or Heaven, wherein he gives light to his Church; he is primarily the Glory of the Lord, and the Goſpel by participation, becauſe it declares him, ſo that much of that which ſhall be ſpoken here of Chriſt, will be ſecondarily to be underſtood of the Goſpel of Chriſt.

That Chriſt is *Light*, the Scripture ſpeaks abundantly; his own voice, concerning himſelf, (notwithſtanding the cavil of the *Phariſees*) is above all exception, for he is Truth it ſelf. *I am the light of the World*, ſayeth he, *he that follows me ſhall not walk in darkneſs*, John 8. 12. The Father that ſent him gives him the ſame title, *I will give thee for a light of the Gentiles*, Iſaiah 42. 6. & 49. 6. And not to multiply citations of the Prophets and Evangeliſts, who with one conſent all magnifie this Light, take the true teſtimony of a falſe Prophet, (and indeed, the favourable witneſs of an Adverſary is ſtrongeſt.) It is that

that of *Balaam*, who ſaw that Chriſt was *Light*, though (becauſe he ſaw him afar off (as he ſays himſelf) and had not his eye fortified, like the true Prophets) he diſcerned him but as a Star. *There ſhall come a Star out of Jacob*, &c. *Numb.* 24. 17. But what need we go ſo far, to be certified what this Light and Glory of the Lord is, the Lord of Glory himſelf, ſeeing the very next verſe to the Text aſſures us of it? *Upon thee ſhall the Lord ariſe.* And in the 19th. verſe, *The Lord ſhall be thy everlaſting light, and thy God thy glory.*

By this time, I hope it is clear That the Eternal Son of God, co-eſſential with his Father, was he that gave accompliſhment to this Propheſie, by appearing to the World wrapt up in the darkneſs of Humane Nature. He is *that day-ſpring from on high that hath viſited us*, as old *Zacharias* ſpeaks, *Luk.* 1.78.

Among all created Excellencies, none can be borrowed more fitly repreſenting Chriſt, than that of Light. And is it not Chriſt that decks his Church with ſupernatural Beauty, and makes it indeed Κόσμος, a comely World called out of the World? But the manifold agreement of Light with Chriſt, doth require more particular conſideration.

Light is (as they call it) *Primum Viſible*, The firſt object of Sight. And Jeſus Chriſt, whom the Apoſtle ſtiles *God over all bleſſed for ever*, is, *Primum Intelligibile*, The prime object of the Underſtanding: What's then become of that Divine Sparkle, that underſtanding Soul,

that the Father of Spirits breaths into theſe Bodies, that all our Thoughts creep here below, and leave their chief and nobleſt object inconſidered? Which of us may not complain (though few of us do) that our Souls have either no Wings to elevate themſelves to the contemplation of him, from whom they iſſued, or if they make offers at it, our affections, engaged to the World, make us, like a Bird tied by the foot, fall preſently down again into the mire? It is high time to leave Hunting ſhadows, and to turn our Internal Eye to the beholding of this Uncreated Light.

In this Elementary World, Light being (as we hear) the firſt Viſible, all things are ſeen by it, and it by it ſelf. Thus is Chriſt, among Spiritual things, in the Elect World of his Church; *all things are made manifeſt by the Light*, ſays the Apoſtle, *Eph.* 5. 13. ſpeaking of Chriſt, as the following verſe doth evidently teſtifie. It is in his Word, that he ſhines and makes it a directing and convincing Light, to diſcover all things that concern his Church and himſelf, to be known by its own brightneſs; how impertinent then is that queſtion ſo much toſſed by the Romiſh Church? How know you the Scriptures (ſay they) to be the Word of God, without the Teſtimony of the Church? I would ask one of them again, How they can know that it is day light, except ſome light a Candle to let them ſee it? They are little vers'd in Holy Scripture,

Scripture, that know not that it's frequently called *Light*; and they are ſenſeleſs that know not that Light is ſeen and known by it ſelf. *If our Goſpel be hid*, ſays the Apoſtle, *it is hid to them that periſh*; the God of this World having blinded their minds againſt the *Light of the glorious Goſpel*, &c. No wonder if ſuch ſtand in need of a Teſtimony, a blind Man knows not that it's light at noon day, but by report, but to thoſe that have eyes, Light is ſeen by it ſelf.

Again, it makes all other things that are in themſelves to become actually viſible (as they ſpeak;) ſo by the word of this ſubſtantial word Jeſus Chriſt, all things in Religion are tryed and diſcovered. The very Authority of the Church which they obtrude ſo confidently, muſt be ſtopt and examined by theſe Scriptures, which they would make ſtand to its courteſie. Doctrines, and Worſhip, muſt be tryed by this Light; and what will not endure this Trial, muſt not be endured in the Houſe of God. *To the Law and to the Teſtimonies* (ſays the Prophet) *if they ſpeak not according to this Word, it is becauſe there is no Light in them*, Iſa. 8. 20. The rays of Chriſt's Light are diſplay'd thro' both his Teſtaments, and in them we ſee him.

But oh! How ſublime is the knowledge of him; None is ignorant that there is Light, yet what Light is, few know; the beſt wits are troubled to define it: So all that bear the Name

of Christians, acknowledge that Christ is, but to know what he is, is of marvellous difficulty; In a speculative way, unsoundable is the depth of his Nature and Properties, *and his Generation who can declare?* says our Prophet, I define not whether his eternal Generation, or his Incarnation in time. These are mysteries that shall hold the very Angels busie in admiration for ever, and for experimental knowledge by Faith, how small is the number of those that are truly acquainted with it?

Again, Light fitly resembles Christ in purity, it visits many impure places, and Lights upon the basest parts of the Earth, and yet remains most pure, and undefiled; Christ sees and takes notice of all the Enormities, and sinful pollutions in the World (as *David* says of the Sun, *Psal.* 19.) *there is nothing hid from his Beams*; ye many of those foul evils he cures, and purgeth away these pollutions, and yet is never stained by them in the least degree; he is a Physician not capable of infection, and therefore while he dwelt among Men, he shunned not Publicans and Sinners, but sought them rather; for with such was his business and employment. Indeed for a frail Man to be too bold in frequenting profane and obstinate persons, though with intention to reclaim them, is not always so safe. *Metus est neattrahant*; They may pull him in, that would help them forth, and pollute him that would cleanse them. But our Saviour, the

the Light of the World, runs no ſuch hazard he is ſtronger than the perverſeſt ſinner, yea than the Prince of darkneſs himſelf, over whom his banners are always victorious, and purer than to be in danger of pollution; his precious blood is a Fountain opened for ſin and uncleanneſs, ſinners are purified by it, and it is not defiled by them; Thouſands have waſht in it, yet it ſhall abide, and always ſhall be moſt perfectly pure: *And ſuch a high Prieſt was needful for us,* ἀμίαντος *undefiled, and though converſant with ſinners, to communicate to them his goodneſs, yet ſeparate from ſinners in immunity from their evil.* Heb. 7. 26.

To this agrees well that Title, the Prophet *Malachi* gives him, when he calls him the *Son of Righteouſneſs*, full of Purity, and Righteouſneſs, as the Sun is of Light, all luminous, without ſpot, ſubject to no Eclipſe in himſelf, his Light being his own; Though our ſins interpoſed, may hide him ſometimes from us, as thoſe real Eclipſes in the Sun, are rather ours, for we are deprived of Light, but not the Sun. Chriſt is many ways moſt fitly called the Sun for ſince all created Light falls infinitely ſhort of his worth, the Prince and Cheif of them, the Sun, cannot but ſuit beſt, ſo far as may be, to ſet forth his excellency.

The Light of the Sun is neither parted nor diminiſhed, by being imparted to many ſeveral People, and Nations that behold it at one time; nor is the Righteouſneſs of this Sun of Righteouſneſs either leſſened to himſelf, or to

ſeveral Believers, by many partaking of it at once; it is wholly conferred upon each one of them, and remains whole in himſelf. Hence it is that not only Chriſt invites ſo liberally ſinners to come to him, but even juſtified perſons would ſo gladly draw all others to lay hold on this Righteouſneſs of their Redeemer, knowing well, that if all the World were inriched by it, they themſelves would be no whit the poorer.

Again the Sun hath a vivifying Power, not only of Plants and Vegetables; but if Philoſophers be right, *Sol & homo generant hominem*; it hath a ſpecial influence in the Generation of Man, but is both more certainly and more eminently true of this Sun we ſpeak of, in Mans Regeneration; that he is the proper and principal Efficient of it. The Evangeliſt calls him at once, *The Light and the Life of Men*, *John* 1. 4. To ſay nothing of him as Treaſure. He is the ſource of our ſpiritual Life and Motion.

When the Sun takes its courſe towards us in the ſeaſon of the year, it drives away the ſharp Froſts, and the heavy Fogs of Winter, it clears the Heavens, decks the Earth with *variety* of Plants and Flowers, and awakes the Birds to the pleaſant ſtrains of their natural Muſick. When Chriſt after a kind of Winter abſence, returns to viſit a declining Church, admirable is the change that he produces; all begins to flouriſh by his ſweet influence, his Houſe, his Worſhip, his people are all Cloath-

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ed with a new beauty, but it's ſpiritual, and therefore, none but ſpiritual eyes can diſcern it. When he will thus return, all the power and policy of Man can no more hinder him, than it could ſtay the courſe of the Sun in its circle. In like manner, a deſerted forſaken Soul, that can do nothing but languiſh and droop, while Chriſt withdraws himſelf, what inexpreſſible vigour and alacrity finds it at his returning? Then thoſe Graces, that while they lurkt ſeem'd to have been loſt, and quite extinguiſhed bud forth anew, with pleaſant colour and fragrant ſmell. 'Tis the Light of his Countenance that baniſheth their falſe fears, that ſtrengthens their Faith, and cures their ſpiritual infirmities. This Sun is indeed the ſovereign Phyſician: *Unto you that fear my name, ſhall the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſe, with healing under his wings.* Mal. 4. 2.

Finally, All darkneſs flees away before him; 'Twas his ariſing in the World, that made the day break, and the ſhadows flee away. The Types and Shadows of the Law, were then aboliſhed. It was his Light that diſpelled the miſts of Ignorance and Idolatry, and he alone delivers the Soul from the night of ſin and miſery procured by it; All the Stars, and the Moon with them, cannot make it day in the World, this is the Suns peculiar, nor can Natures higheſt Light, the moſt refined Science and Morality, make it day in the Soul; for this is Chriſts.

The common Light of Reaſon, every Man

that comes into the World, hath from him as his Creator, but the ſpecial Light of Grace they alone that are born again, have from him as their Saviour. Groſs is the darkneſs of every natural mind, till Chriſt enlighten it. ἐπέχεται. It can neither diſcern, nor receive the things of God. *Ye were darkneſs* (ſays the Apoſtle) *but now are you light in the Lord*, it's nothing elſe but a maſs of darkneſs, and the companion of darkneſs is confuſion, as it was in the maſs of the World before Light was Created, and what is there under Heaven more confuſed than a carnal mind? The affections quite out of order, and though all naught, yet ſometimes fighting one with another, and continually hurrying the Judgment whither they pleaſe; Now to diſſipate this darkneſs, and remedy this confuſion, Chriſt ſhines externally in his Word, but too much daily experience teſtifies, that this is not ſufficient. Therefore to thoſe whom he will make Children of the Light, to meet with this outward Light of his Word, he gives another internal, by the Spirit. The Sun can make dark things clear, but it cannot make a blind Man ſee them, but herein is the excellency of this Sun, that he illuminates not only the object, but the faculty, doth not only reveal the myſteries of his Kingdom, but opens blind eyes to behold them; and the firſt lineament of the renewed Image of God in Man, is that Light in the underſtanding, removing not only that ſimple Ignorance of Diviue things, but

but theſe miſconceits likewiſe, and falſe principles, and that wicked pertinacy, whereof Mans mind is naturally full; he that at firſt commanded Light to ſhine out of Darkneſs, infuſeth ſaving Knowledge and Light, into the dark Soul of Man. And this Light (as was ſaid) kindles Love. It is *Vehiculum caloris*, hath a powerful influence, begetting heat in the affections. Nor can this Divine Light be ever again fully extinguiſhed, but conducts the Soul that hath received it, till it be received to the Land of Light and perfect happineſs. Thus in our Redeemer is *the Fountain of Life*, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *And in his Light do we ſee Light*, Pſal. 36. 9.

He is likewiſe here ſtiled, *The Glory of the Lord.* In the 2*d.* of *Sam.* 4 *Chap.* The Ark of God is called the glory, but it enjoyeth that name as a Type of Chriſt, in whom that now which the Ark contained was fulfilled. *The Tabernacle is called the dwelling of God's glory*, Pſal. 26. 8. *Likewiſe typifying him in the Tabernacle, in whoſe humane nature that glory dwells far more excellently.* Joh. 1. 14. ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, *he dwelt in a Tabernacle among us, and we ſaw his glory as the glory of the only begotten Son of God, full of Grace and Truth.* The Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* calls him ἀπαύγασμα, *the brightneſs of his Fathers glory, and the Character of his Perſon.* And under theſe expreſſions lies that remarkable myſtery of the Sons Eternal relation to the Father (which is rather humbly to be adored than

than boldly to be explained) either by God's perfect underſtanding of his own Eſſence, or by any other notion. It is true, he is called *the Wiſdom of the Father*, but this Wiſdom is too wonderful for us; He is called the *Word*, but what this Word means, I think we ſhall not well know, till we ſee him Face to Face, and contemplate him in the Light of Glory, mean while we may ſee him, to be the Glory of the Lord in a ſafer way, and ſufficient meaſure to guide us on to that clear viſion reſerved above for us. *We ſaw his glory*, ſays that ſublime Evangeliſt, but how could this excellent glory be ſeen by ſinful Men, and not aſtoniſh and ſtrike dead the beholders, He, *was made Fleſh and dwelt among us* (ſays he) and ſo we ſaw his glory. That Majeſty that we could never have lookt upon, he veiled with humane fleſh, that we might not die, yea live, by ſeeing him. There he ſtood behind the wall, and ſhewed himſelf through the Trellis; *In him dwelt the fulneſs of the Godhead*, Col. 2. 9. But it was σωματικως, bodily, for who could have endured the ſplendor of the Godheads fulneſs, if that Cloud of his Body had not been drawn betwixt? And through it did ſhine that Grace and Truth, that Wiſdom and Power in the work of our Redemption, whereby he was clearly manifeſted to be the glory of the Lord.

Surely we need not now ask the Church, or a believing Soul what is her beloved more than another, or if we do, well may ſhe anſwer,

ſwer, *He is the chiefeſt among Ten Thouſand, and altogether lovely*, for he is the Light of the World, and the glory of the Lord. Let not the numerous Titles of Earthly Potentates be once admitted into compariſon with theſe. If we believe *David*, in his 62 *Pſal. 9. verſe*, the ſtatelieſt things and perſons in the World being Ballanced with vanity it ſelf, are found lighter than it, and ſhall we offer to weigh them with Chriſt. If we knew him righly, we would not ſell the leaſt glance or beam of this Light of his Countenance, for the higheſt favour of mortal Men, though it were conſtant and unchangeable (which it is not;) it is ignorance of Chriſt that maintains the credit of thoſe vanities we admire: The Chriſtian that is truly acquainted with him, enamoured with the brightneſs of his beauty can generouſly trample upon the ſmilings of the World with the one foot, and her frownings with the other; if he be rich or honourable, or both, yet he glories not in that, but Chriſt who is the glory of the Lord, is even then his chiefeſt glory. And the Light of Chriſt obſcures that Worldly ſplendor in his eſtimation; and as the enjoyment of Chriſt overtops all his other joys, ſo it overcomes his griefs, as that great Light drowns the Light of proſperity, it ſhines bright in the darkneſs of Affliction; no dungeon ſo cloſe that can keep out the rays of Chriſt's love from his beloved Priſoners. The World can no more take away this Light, than it can

give it, *Unto the juſt ariſeth Light in Darkneſs*, ſayeth the Pſalmiſt, and, *When I ſit in darkneſs the Lord ſhall be a Light unto me*, ſays the Church in the 7*th.* of *Micah*, 8 *verſe*. And as this Light is a Comfort, ſo it is likewiſe a Defence, that ſuffers no more of diſtreſs to come near the godly, than is profitable for them; Therefore we find very frequently in Scripture, where this Light and Glory is mentioned, Protection and Safety joyntly ſpoken of: *The Lord is my Light, and withal my Salvation, whom ſhall I fear*, ſays *David*, Pſal 27.1. *The Lord is a Sun, and he is a Shield too*, Pſal.84. 21. And truly I think him Shot-proof, that hath the Sun for his Buckler. And for glory; *Upon all the Glory ſhall be a Defence*, ſays our Prophet in his 4. *Chapter*, 5. *verſe*. And the Prophet *Zach.* where he calls the Lord the Churches *Glory in the midſt of her*, he calls him likewiſe *a Wall of fire round about her*, Zach. 2.4. The only way then to he ſafe, is to keep this Light, and this Glory intire; to part with any part of this glory, is to make a breach in that Wall of fire, and if that be a means of ſafety let all Men judge; No, keep it whole, and then they muſt come through the fire that will aſſault you. Nor is this Light only defenſive of the Church that embraceth it, but likewiſe deſtructive of all adverſe powers; ſee a clear Teſtimony for this, in the 10. of *Iſaiah*, 17, 18. *verſes*. *And the Light of* Iſrael *ſhall be for a fire, and his holy one for a flame* (*ſpeaking there of the* Aſſyrians) *and it ſhall burn*

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and devour his Thorns and his Briers in one day, and ſhall conſume the glory of his Forreſt, and of his Fruitful Field, (both Soul and Body) and they ſhall be as when a Standard bearer fainteth, &c.

Let ever then the Church of God entirely obſerve this Light and Glory of the Lord; and ſhe ſhall undoubtedly be preſerved by it. But to cloſe in a word, firſt to thoſe that know this Light, and then to thoſe that are yet ſtrangers to it.

You who know Chriſt, glory in him perpetually; well may he be your glory, when he is the Glory of the Lord: There are ſome that pretend love to Chriſt, and yet a taunting word of ſome profane miſcreant, will almoſt make them aſhamed of him; how would they die for Chriſt that are ſo tender as not to endure a Scoff for him? Where is that Spirit of *Moſes*, that accounted the very reproaches of Chriſt greater riches than the Treaſures of *Egypt*? O learn to glory in Chriſt, think highly of him, and ſpeak ſo too. Methinks it is the Diſcourſe in the World becomes Chriſtians beſt, to be ſpeaking one to another honorably of Jeſus Chriſt, and of all Men, the Preachers of his Goſpel ſhould be moſt frequent in this Subject. This ſhould be their great Theam, to extol and commend the Lord Jeſus, that they may enflame many hearts with his love; and beſt can they do this, who are moſt ſtrongly taken with this love themſelves; Such will moſt gladly abaſe themſelves,

that

that Christ may be magnified, and whatsoever be their excellencies, they still account Christ their glory, and they are richly repayed, for he accounts them his glory; this would seem a strange word, if it were not the Apostles. *They are the Messengers of the Churches, and the Glory of Christ*, 2 Cor. 8. 23. Delight who will either in sloth and ignorance on the one hand, or in vain speculations and strains of frothy wit on the other: Surely those Preachers shall only be approved in the great day, who have constantly endeavoured in their measure, to speak the best and fittest they could for their Masters advantage, and happy these Christians of what estate soever, that in all estates make Christ their glory, and in all Actions have their eye fixed upon his glory, who is their Light and the Glory of the Lord.

Now to those that are strangers to him (would to God none that are to be spoken to, were such) To them I say, notice would be given both of the excellency and necessity of Christ. Though it were possibly to grop the way to happiness in the dark; yea, none will deny but to be conducted thither by a constant Light, is both more safe and more delightful. But were there any possibility to attain that end without this Light, the neglect of it were not altogether so strange. The wonder of all is this, That Christ alone being both that Life, and the way to it, and the Truth or Light that guides in that way, yet Christians

Chriſtians (ſo called) ſhould eſteem and look after him as little, as if he were wholly needleſs: What meaneſt thou, O beſotted ſinner? is it ſo light a thing to die in thy ſins, and eternally for them, that thou wilt not ſo much as open and admit the Light of Salvation, what ſhalt thou pretend in that terrible day? Though all other kind of people ſhould offer ſome excuſe, thou who haſt heard the Goſpel, ſhall be ſpeechleſs: For not only ſhall the rigour of juſtice condemn thee, but Mercy it ſelf ſhalt plead againſt thee, for thou haſt deſpiſed it. That Light did come and was not embraced, ſhall be the main condemnation. How many thouſands that make no doubt of Heaven, yet ſhall then fall ſhort of it? It is not a ſuperficial profeſſion that will then paſs current. It is not ſome publick ſighs and groans from an unſanctified heart, which either come from cuſtom or ſome preſent touch of the Word, nor yet is it ſome ſudden riſings of inward affection towards Chriſt upon the report of his worth, that ſhall then ſerve the turn. The intellective knowledge of Chriſt, the diſtinct underſtanding, yea the Orthodox Preaching of his Goſpel, the maintaining of his publick cauſe, and ſuffering for it, ſhall not then be found ſufficient, only that peculiar apprehenſion of Chriſt, thoſe conſtant flames of ſpiritual love, that even courſe of holy walking in his Light ſhall be theſe Characters, whereby Chriſt ſhall own his Children, and admit them into the inheritance of perfect Light.

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One of the ſpeakers in the Book of *Job*, diſcourſing of the proſperity of the ungodly calls it, but his Candle, and tells how long it can laſt. *His Candle* (ſays he) *ſhall be put out with him*, and that's the longeſt term of it, if it laſt his life time, it ſhall convey him no further, he goes into eternity in the dark; and therefore, as St. *John* ſays, he knows not whither he goeth. *Quo nunc abibis?* ſaid that Emperor to his Soul; is it not a ſad thing, when the Soul that knows no other but worldly Light, muſt take leave of it, and enter into eternal darkneſs, there to be unceſſantly tormented with preſent anguiſh, and the frightful expectation of the laſt Judgment, where it muſt take again that Body which was the complice of its wickedneſs to be partaker of its puniſhment? where it ſhall have a double miſery to behold Crowns of Immortality diſtributed to the godly, after the ſhort combates of this Life, and it ſelf thruſt out among the Devils? then ſhall all Men be ſome way ſenſible, what is the worth of this now contemned light, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the greateſt number too late, for they ſhall be baniſht from it for ever; but the Righteous ſhall then moſt perfectly know, and for ever enjoy this Light, and Glory of the Lord, *To whom with the Father of Lights and Spirit of Grace, be eternity of Praiſe and Honour.*

SERMON,

SERMON, VI.

PREFACE.

WHat *ſhall it profit a Man, if he gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul,* ſaid our Saviour, who was to lay down a ranſom for it, and knew well that it would coſt infinitely more than the World was worth, yet the moſt of Men value their own Souls, at a far lower rate than the whole World, loſing them for broken morſels of it; yea many times for vain hopes that are never accompliſhed; And as theſe Men make a miſerable bargain, ſo by the contrary, they that loſe the World, or any thing Worldly, yea though it were the whole, to ſave their Souls, make a profitable loſs of it. Nature teaches Men to hazard and loſe all for the life of the Body, rather than loſe it. (Although it prove many times very uncomfortable by the loſe of theſe outward things,) and yet the moſt part of Men paſs their whole life-time without one ſerious thought of the exellency and importance of their Souls, whoſe life and Happineſs is of a higher nature, and neither conſiſts in, nor depends upon any thing here below. Hence it is, that while

they uſe the helps of this preſent life, and the defences of it when it is in danger, and uſe them with ſo much diligence and attention; The means of that better life, of their better part, their Souls, they either uſe not at all or ſo ſlightly and coldly, that they never find Salvation in them. You may find it ſome way in your ſelves, the threatnings and preparations of Men againſt you have awakened and rowſed you more to think upon means of your temporal ſafety; but how few are ſenſible, and afraid of the wrath of God, who, as our Saviour tells us, can kill both Body and Soul, and caſt them into Hell; you want not frequent advertiſement from the Word of God, ſo plentifully Preacht, that many are periſhing; one part in groſs Ignorance of God, another in Profane, and Licentious living, and the greateſt part in a formal and lifeleſs profeſſion of Religion, without the power of it, and yet where are they that lay it to heart, and beſtir themſelves to reſcue their Souls from deſtruction? Certainly whatſoever Men profeſs, it is unbelief that is the cauſe of Impenitence; Men are not convinced of the purity of Gods nature, nor ſenſible of the impurity of their own, therefore they apply not themſelves in good earneſt to the work of Repentance, and Reformation, the livelieſt part of it. Labour then for a more active and practical knowledge of God and Divine truths, ſuch as may humble and renew your Souls, not only that you may be delivered from outward troubles

troubles that threaten you; but much more, that you may eſcape the wrath to come. And becauſe neither the Word Preached, nor Judgments, nor Mercies, that are ſet before you, are ſufficient to quicken a dead Soul, or ſoften a hard Heart, without the effectual concourſe of the Spirit of God, let us have recourſe to the Throne of Grace, by humble and earneſt Prayer, in the Name and Mediation of Jeſus Chriſt.

Pſal. XLII. 8.

Yet the Lord will command his loving kindneſs in the day time, and in the night his Song ſhall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.

MAN *is born to trouble as the ſparks fly upwards,* ſaith *Eliphaz,* Job 5. 7. And as it is the corruption and ſinfulneſs of his Birth and Nature that has expoſed him to trouble, ſo Nature uſually ſets him at work, to look out for ſuch things, as may preſerve, and deliver him from trouble, or at leaſt, mitigate and temper the bitterneſs of it. And becauſe there is not any one worldly thing that hath either certainty or ſufficiency enough to ſerve at all times, therefore worldly and natural men are forced to make uſe of variety, and are but badly ſerved with them all.

The believing Soul hath but one comfort whereon he relies, but it's a great one, which alone weighs down all the reſt. Bread ſtrengthens, and Wine makes glad the heart of Man, *Pſal.* 104. 15. *But God is the ſtrength of my heart* (ſays the Pſalmiſt) *Pſal.* 73. 20. and the gladneſs of it too. *Thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart more than they have, when their corn and wine increaſeth*; and therefore, while the reſt are ſeeking after ſome ſcattered crumbs of goodneſs in the Creatures, *Who will ſhew us any good?* He fixes his choice upon this one thing, *The light of God's countenance*; and it is the conſtant aſſurance of this, that upholds him; waves beat upon him, yea, and go over him, yet the Lord will *command his loving kindneſs to ſhine upon him.*

In this *Pſalm*, we may perceive the *Pſalmiſt* full of perplexed thoughts, and that betwixt ſtrong deſires and griefs, and yet, in the midſt of them, now and then, ſome advantage, and intermixing ſtrains of Hope, with his ſad complaints; for, immediately before, we heard nothing but the impetuous noiſe of many waters, *deep calling unto deep.* In the former verſe, we have there, as it were, a touch of the ſweet ſound of *David*'s Harp, *Yet the Lord will command his loving kindneſs in the day time.*

In the words we have *David*'s *confidence*, and *David*'s *purpoſe*, the one ſuiting very well with the other. His *Confidence* in God's loving kindneſs; *Yet the Lord will command his loving kindneſs*

kindneſs. And his *purpoſe*; *And in the night his ſong ſhall be with me.*

It is true, thoſe words (*in the night his ſong ſhall be with me*) may be taken as a part of the expreſſion of his confidence, taking his Song, for the matter or ſubject of the Song, the goodneſs of God; as if he ſhould ſay, both in the day, and in the night, I ſhall find the ſweet fruits of God's favour and loving kindneſs. But not excluding that, I rather take it intended, as his *reſolution*, that it ſhould be his cuſtom, in the quiet Seaſon of the Night, to look back upon God's goodneſs manifeſted to him in the actions and occurrences of the Day; and thus entertaining his Soul with that ſecret diſcourſe, he would ſtir it up to the praiſes of his God, and withal, would joyn Prayer for the continuance, and further manifeſtation of it. *David* (as is hinted before) intermixing ſtrains of Hope, not that faint and common hope of poſſibility, or probability, that after ſtormy days it may be better with him, but a certain hope that ſhall never make aſhamed; ſuch a *hope* as ſprings from *faith*, yea, in effect, is one with it. Faith reſts upon the goodneſs and truth of Him that hath promiſed, and Hope raiſing it ſelf upon Faith ſo eſtabliſhed, ſtands up and looks out to the future accompliſhment of the promiſe. Therefore the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 11. 1. calls Faith *The ſubſtance of things hoped for*, ὑπόστασις, *And the evidence of things not ſeen*; of all other wavering hope, here's, they ſay, true, *Spes eſt*

nomen boni incerti. But this can ſay, *The Lord will command his loving kindneſs*, &c.

The Lord will command] What a ſudden change is here! Would you think this were the ſame man that was even now almoſt overwhelmed? Thus Faith always conquers, though ſeldom or never, without hard conflict, not only aſſaulted by troubles without, but, which is worſe, by Incredulity within; nor aſſaulted only, but many times brought under, yet does it not ſuccumb and give over, knowing, that even after many foils, yet in the end it ſhall overcome.

His *confidence* you may conſider, firſt, *oppoſitely*, and then *poſitively*, or ſimply in it ſelf. Oppoſitely both to his preſent trouble, and to his complaints, wherein this trouble is expreſt, and that is fitly implyed, though it be not in the Original.

Though the multitude and weight of *Jobs* Afflictions, did force out of him ſome bitter words, and made him look back upon the day of his Birth, and curſe it, yet Faith recovers him from his diſtemper, and makes him look forward with joy, even as far as to the bleſſed day of his Reſurrection, *Job* 19. 25. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand, at the latter day, upon the earth: And though after my skin worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God.*

The former words of impatience he ſpake indeed, but he adheres to theſe, and wiſhes that they were written with *an Iron Pen, and*

Engraven

Engraven to abide for ever. Therefore we hear of him again in Scripture, as a righteous and patient man, but of theſe words of his impatience not a word. In the 77 *Pſalm*, what ſad Expoſtulations are theſe the *Pſalmiſt* uſes, *Will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promiſe fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies?* But ſee how he corrects them, *ver.* 10. *Then I ſaid, this is my Infirmity, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the moſt High.* Thus *Jonah*, 2 *Chap. ver.* 3, 4. much like this, but there, literally true. And here deep calls unto deep, yet in the midſt of thoſe deeps, Faith is not drowned, you ſee it lifts up its head above water; *Yet the Lord will command*, &c. Yea, though it takes particular notice of God's hand in the affliction, yet it goes not to another hand for comfort. *Thy* Waves and *thy* Billows; yet that ſame God, whoſe Waves are like to deſtroy me, will ere long command *his loving kindneſs to ſhine upon me. Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.* A wonderful expreſſion of Faith. He ſays not, though he afflict me ſore, but *though he ſlay me*; not though evil men or Satan ſhould do it, but, *though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.* What troubled mind can imagine any thing harder againſt it ſelf than this?

1. Learn then to check theſe exceſſive doubts and fears, by ſome ſuch reſolute word as this: Turn the promiſe, firſt upon thy ſelf, and then

upon God: Consider that he hath promised Life Eternal to Believing, and then say, Tho' I saw his hand, as it were, lift up to destroy me, yet from that very hand will I expect Salvation; for I have his word engaged for it, that if I believe I shall be saved. I do not say, that a Soul under temptation can assure it self, that God is already reconciled to it (and herein possibly lies oftentimes the mistake) for this reflex act of assurance, though it be our duty to seek after it, it self is rather a gift and reward than a duty; but the direct and proper act of Faith is of perpetual use and necessity, and then most, when there is least sense of assurance, and it is no other but a recumbency or reliance, rolling over of the Soul upon free mercy: That which breeds us much perplexity, is, That we would invert God's order. If I knew (say some) that the Promise belonged to me, and Christ were a Saviour to me, I could believe; that is to say, would first see, and then believe. But the true method is just contrary, *I had fainted* says *David*, *unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord.* He believed it first, and saw it afterwards. And in this same *Psalm*, labouring to still his disquiered Soul, by elevating it above his troubles, to look upon his God; he says to it, *Hope in him now, and ere it be long, thou shalt praise him for the help of his countenance, even while his countenance is with-held.* And thus Faith ought to triumph over Spiritual fears and difficulties.

2. How

2. How incongruous is it, that outward dangers or trials ſhould over-match it; will you truſt God, upon his Word, for Salvation and Eternal Happineſs, and be diffident for the ſafety and needful Bleſſings of this Temporal Life, which life, in compariſon, is but a moment, and the beſt things of it but droſs? Conſider that you diſhonour Faith exceedingly, and degenerate from the believing Saints of former Ages. Indeed, the Promiſes of this Life, and that which concerns it, (though Godlineſs with them) yet they are not ſo abſolute, nor are they ſo abſolutely needful for you; but conſidering the Wiſdom and Love of your Heavenly Father, learn to compoſe your minds by it.

I will not be afraid, though ten thouſands of the people ſet themſelves againſt me round about, ſays *David*, Pſal. 3. 6. And leſt you think him ſingular, in the 46 *Pſalm*, it is the joint-voice of the whole Church of God, *We will not fear, though the earth be removed, and the mountains be caſt into the midſt of the Sea: Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled; though the mountains ſhake with the ſwelling thereof. There is a river, the ſtreams whereof make glad the City of God: The holy place of the tabernacle of the moſt high God is in the midſt of her; ſhe ſhall not be moved.* That is the way to be immoveable, in the midſt of troubles as a Rock amidſt the Waves. When God is in the midſt of a Kingdom or City, he makes it firm as *Mount Sion*, that

that cannot be removed. When he is in the midſt of the Soul, though Calamities throng about it on all hands, and roar like the Billows of the Sea, yet there is a conſtant Calm within, ſuch a Peace as the World can neither give nor take away. On the other ſide, what is it but want of lodging God in the Soul, and that in his ſtead, the World is in the midſt of mens Hearts, that makes them ſhake like the leaves of Trees at every blaſt of danger? What a ſhame is it, ſeeing natural men, by the ſtrength of Nature, and help of Moral Precepts, have attained ſuch undaunted reſolution and courage againſt outward changes; yet they that would paſs for Chriſtians, are ſo ſoft and fainting, and ſo ſenſible of the ſmalleſt alterations. The advantage that we have in this regard is infinite; what's the beſt ground-work of a Philoſophers conſtancy, but as moving ſands in compariſon of the Rock that we may build upon? But the truth is, That either we make no proviſion of Faith for times of Trial, or if any we have, we neither know the worth, nor the uſe of it, but lay it by, as a dead unprofitable thing, when we ſhould moſt uſe and exerciſe it. Notwithſtanding all our frequenting of God's Houſe, and our plauſible profeſſion; Is it not too true, that the moſt of us either do not at all furniſh our ſelves with theſe ſpiritual arms, that are ſo needful in the militant Life of a Chriſtian, or we learn not how to handle them? and are not in readineſs for

for Service, as was the caſe of that improvident Souldier, whom his Commander found mending ſome piece of his Armour, when they were to give Battle. It were not amiſs before Afflictions overtake us, to try and train the mind ſomewhat by ſuppoſing the very worſt and hardeſt of them. To ſay, What if the Waves and Billows of adverſity, were ſwelled and flowing in upon me; Could I then believe? God hath ſaid, *I will not fail thee, nor forſake thee,* with a heap of negations, in no wiſe, I will not, he hath ſaid, *when thou paſſeſt through the fire and through the water I will be with thee.* Theſe I know, and can diſcourſe of them. But could I repoſe and reſt upon them in the day of Trial? put your Souls to it, is there any thing or perſon that you eſteem and love exceedingly; ſay, What if I ſhould loſe this? Is there ſome evil that is naturally more contrary and terrible to you than many others? Spare not to preſent that to the imagination too, and labour to make Faith Maſter of it before hand in caſe it ſhould befal you, and if the firſt thought of it ſcare you, look upon it the oftener, till the Viſage of it become familiar to you, that you ſtart and ſcare no more at it, nor is there any danger in theſe thoughts; Troubles cannot be the nearer by thus thinking on them: But you may be both ſafer and ſtronger, by breathing and exerciſing of your Faith in ſuppoſed caſes. But if you be ſo tender ſpirited, that you cannot look upon Calamities

mities ſo much as in thought or fancy, how would you be able for a real encounter? No, ſure. But the Soul that hath made God his ſtay, can do both; ſee it in that notable reſolution of the Prophet, *Habakkuk.* 3. 17. *Although the Fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive ſhall fail, and the fields ſhall yield no meat, the flock ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no herd in the ſtalls: Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord I will joy in the God of my Salvation. The Lord God is my ſtrength.* And in *David*, Pſal. 23. 4. *Yea*, (ſays he) *though I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of Death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy Rod and thy Staff, they comfort me.* You ſee how Faith is as Cork to his Soul, keeping it from ſinking in the deeps of Afflictions: Yea that big word which one ſays of his morally juſt Man is true of the believer, *Si fractus illabatur orbis.* Though the very Fabrick of the World were falling about him, yet would he ſtand upright, and undaunted in the midſt of its ruins.

In this *confidence* conſidered in it ſelf, we may obſerve the *Object* of it; *The loving kindneſs of the Lord.* 2. The manner or way by which he expects to enjoy it; *The Lord will Command it.* 3. The time; *in the day.*

His loving kindneſs.] He ſays not, return to the Houſe of God for deliverance from the heavy oppreſſion and ſharp reproaches of the Enemy, which would have anſwered more particularly and expreſsly to his preſent

ſent griefs, but *his loving kindneſs*. And the reaſon of thus expreſſing himſelf, I conceive to be two fold. 1. In the aſſurance of this is neceſſarily compriſed the certainty of all other good things. This ſpecial favour and benignity of the Lord, doth engage his Power and Wiſdom (both which you know are infinite) to the procurement of every thing truly good for thoſe whom he ſo favours; Therefore it is that *David* chuſes rather to name the ſtreams of particular mercies in this their living Source and Fountain, than to ſpecifie them ſeverally. Nor is it only thus more compendious, but fuller too, which are the two great advantages of Speech, and this I take to be the other reaſon. 2. A Man may enjoy great deliverances, and many poſitive benefits from the hand of God, and yet have no ſhare in his loving kindneſs. How frequently doth God heap Riches, and Honour, and Health on theſe he hates, and the common gifts of the Mind too, Wiſdom, and Learning, yea the common gifts of his own Spirit, and gives a fair and long day of external proſperity, to thoſe on whom he never vouchſafed the leaſt glance of his favourable Countenance yea, on the contrary, gives all thoſe ſpecious gifts to them with a ſecret curſe as here; as he gave a King in wrath to his people, ſo he often gives Kingdoms in his wrath to Kings. Therefore *David* looks higher than the very Kingdom which God promiſed him, and gave him, when he ſpeaks of *his loving kindneſs*. In

a word, he resolves to solace himself with the assurance of this, though he was stript of all other comforts, and to quiet his Soul herein, till deliverance come, and when it shall come, and whatsoever mercies with it, to receive them as fruits and effects of this *loving kindness*. Not prizing them so much for themselves, as for the impressions of that love which is upon them, and it is that Image and Superscription that both engages and moves him most to pay his tribute of praise. And truly this is every where *David*'s temper; his frequent distresses and wants never excite him so much to desire any particular comfort in the Creature, as to intreat the presence and favour of God himself: His saddest times are, when to his sense, this favour is eclipsed. *In my prosperity I said I shall not be moved.* And what was his adversity that made him of another mind? *Thou hiddest thy face and I was troubled.* This verifies his position in that same *Psalm. In thy favour is Life.* Thus in the 63. *Psalm* at the beginning, *My Soul thirsteth for thee in a dry Land where there is no water*, not for water where there is none, but *for thee where there is no water.* Therefore he adds in the 3. *verse, Thy loving kindness is better than Life*, and all that be truly wise, and of this mind, will subscribe to his choice. Let them enjoy this loving kindness and prize it, that what ere befalls them, their happiness and joy is above the reach of all calamities, let them be derided and reproached abroad, yet

still

ſtill this inward perſwaſion makes them glad and contented, as a rich Man ſaid, though the people hated and taunted him, yet when he came home and lookt upon his Cheſts, *Egomet mihi plaudo domi*? With how much better reaſon do Believers bear out external injuries, what inward contentment, when they conſider themſelves truly enricht with the favour of God? And as this makes them contemn the contempts that the World puts upon them, ſo likewiſe it breeds in them a neglect, and diſdain of thoſe poor trifles that the World admires. The Sum of their deſires is (as that *Cynicks*, was of the Sun-ſhine) that the rays of the love of God may ſhine conſtantly upon them. The favourable aſpect and large proffers of Kings, and Princes, would be unwelcome to them, if they ſhould ſtand betwixt them and the ſight of that Sun. And truly they have reaſon. What are the higheſt things the World affords? What are great Honors and great Eſtates, but great Cares and Griefs well dreſt, and coloured over with a ſhew of pleaſure, that promiſe contentment, and perform nothing but vexation? That they are not ſatisfying is evident, for the obtaining of much of them doth but ſtretch the appetite, and teach Men to deſire more? they are not ſolid neither, will not the pains of a Gout, of Strangury, or ſome ſuch malady (to ſay nothing of the worſt, the pains of a guilty conſcience) blaſt all theſe delights? What reliſh finds a Man in large Revenues, and ſtately Buildings,

Buildings, in high Preferments, and honourable Titles, when either his Body or Mind is in anguish. And besides the emptiness of all these things, you know, they want one main point, *Continuance*. But the loving kindness of God hath all requisites to make the Soul happy. *O satisfie us early with Goodness or Mercy*, (says *Moses*) *That we may rejoyce and be glad all our days*, Ps. 90. 14. There is fulness in that for the vastest desires of the Soul, *satisfie us*, there is solid contentment that begets true joy and gladness, and there is permanency, *all our days*. It is the only comfort of this Life, and assurance of a better. This were a large Subject to insist on, but certainly the naming of *his loving kindness* should beget in each heart, an high esteem of it, an ardent desire after it. And if it do so with you, then know that it is only to be found in the way of holiness. He is a holy God, and can love nothing that's altogether unlike himself; There must always be some similitude and conformity of nature to ground kindness and friendship, and to maintain it; that saying is true, *idem velle & idem nolle firma amicitia*. What gross self flattery is it, to think that God's loving kindness can be towards you, while you are in love with Sin, which he so perfectly hates? How can the profane Swearer or voluptuous Person, or the Oppressor, and Covetous, or the close Hypocrite (worse than any of them) rest upon the loving kindness of the Lord in the day of troubles? No sure.

But

But the terror of his wrath ſhall be added to all their other calamities; and they ſhall find it heavier than all the reſt. God will not pour this precious Oyl of gladneſs, this perſwaſion of his love, into filthy Veſſels, even his own Children, when they grieve and ſadden his holy Spirit by unholineſs, ſhall be ſadly puniſhed by the withdrawing of theſe comforting and ſenſible expreſſions of his Love.

Labour then you that as yet never taſted of this Love, to know what it means; forſake and hate that which hitherto hath made you ſtrangers to it; for if you obtain this, it ſhall comfort you when theſe things cannot, but would rather prove your greateſt torment. And you that have received any Teſtimonies of it, entertain it carefully, for it is your beſt comfort both in your beſt days, and in your worſt days too.

You would all gladly be delivered from theſe many evils that threaten you, for many they be indeed, and Peace is a great bleſſing. But ſuppoſe you were ſecured from all theſe fears, and he ſhould command a ſudden calm (which truly he can do) would you then think your ſelves happy. That life of yours which you ſo fear to loſe by Fire or Sword, though you had Peace, would ere long fall into the hands of ſome Ague, or Fever, or Conſumption, and periſh by them, or at the longeſt a few years will end it, it is a lighted Candle, that though no Body blow out, will quickly burn out of it ſelf.

But this loving kindneſs is not ſo ſhort-lived, it ſhall laſt as long as your Souls; and ſo long as it laſts, they ſhall be happy. Thoſe goods that you fear ſhall be pillaged, and ſpoiled in War, how many hazards are they ſubject to even in Peace? *Solomon* tells you, *That Riches oftentimes* (though no body take them away) *make themſelves wings, and fly away.* And truly many times the undue ſparing of them, is but the letting of their wings grow; which makes them readier to fly away, and the contributing a part of them to do good, only clips their wings a little, and makes them ſtay the longer with their owner, (but that by the way) Howſoever *in the day of death, and in the day of wrath,* as *Solomon* ſays, *they profit nothing at all.* So then though you may deſire that God would command deliverance for you; yet, if you would be truly happy, your greater and more earneſt ſuit would be, That he command his loving kindneſs to appear to your Souls; and having once obtained this, you may poſſibly be perſecuted, and endure hard Trials: But one thing is made ſure, you cannot be miſerable, nor ſhall you want temporal Mercies and Preſervation too, ſo far as they are good for you. The inward aſſurance of this Love, ſhall carry you ſtrangely and ſweetly through all outward viciſſitudes, and when the day ſhall come, that all other comforts ſhall look pale upon you, then ſhall you find the worth and happineſs of this, more than ever before.

Command]

Command] Make it appear to me. Sometimes God is ſaid to ſhut up, and hide his Love from his Children, and that is a mournfull time with them. But we Read not that he ſhuts out *Love*, and ceaſeth altogether to have affection to thoſe whom once he loved. And therefore when he ſhews himſelf again in the gracious manifeſtations of his mercy, he is not ſaid to begin anew to Love them, but only to Command his Love, which ere while he had countermanded, to appear.

In the day] If you have a mind to take the day and night figuratively, for proſperous and adverſe times, it would lead you in that ſenſe to obſerve *David*'s conſtancy in Gods praiſes that not only in the day of deliverance, but even in the night of diſtreſs, he reſolved a Song for God. And truly many times God gives his Childen in an afflicted condition, more ſweetneſs of Spirit, and Aptitude, not only to pray, but to praiſe; and more ſpiritual delight in himſelf, than in times of outward Peace and Proſperity: *He giveth Songs in the night*, ſaith *Job*, and you know the ſound of Muſick is moſt delightful in the night. But to take it properly, he is confident that in the ſeveral Actions and Occurrences of the day he ſhould find the goodneſs and favourable aſſiſtance of the Lord, and then he reſolves, which leads to the other part of the Text.

In the night time to Meditate on that goodneſs, and frame a Song of Praiſe to the Author of it.

And indeed what is the whole Threed of

our Life, but a checkered twiſt, Black and White, of delights and dangers interwoven? And the happieſt paſſing of it, is conſtantly to enjoy, and to obſerve the experiences of God's goodneſs, and to praiſe him for them. *David* was a wiſe King, and withal a valiant Souldier. And yet we ſee he thought not this experience inconſonant with either of theſe two conditions. This pecious Book of *Pſalms* (a great part thereof being his) teſtifies clearly, that Prayer and Praiſes were his great employment. A religious diſpoſition of mind may not only conſiſt with fortitude and magnanimity, but is indeed the beſt principal and cauſe of both, contrary to the wicked and fooliſh opinion of profane perſons; whether of the two, do you think, might welcome a day of Battle with moſt courage and reſolution, he that had paſt the precedeing night in revelling and carouzing, or he that had ſpent it in Prayer, and obtained ſome aſſurance of a better Life? Truly if they went on with equal forwardneſs, there is no Man except he were an Atheiſt, but would judge the one to be Bruitiſh Fury, and Precipitation, and the other true valour.

His Song] In the worſt Eſtate, there is ever ſome mater of praiſe to be mixed with requeſt and truly we may juſtly ſuſpect that our neglect of praiſes makes our prayers unacceptable.

And my Prayer] In the beſt Eſtate here below, Praiſe muſt be accompanied with Prayer,

er, our wants and neceſſities, and ſtraits return daily upon us, and require new ſupplies of Mercy, and Prayer if we know how to uſe it right, is the way to obtain them all.

To the God of my Life] Or the God that is my Life. This word is added, as the reaſon of all that went before. If you ask *David* why he repoſeth ſo much upon the loving kindneſs of God? what he means to ſpend ſo much pains in Praiſes and Prayer to God? He Anſwers; Becauſe he is my Life. He is the Author and preſerver of my temporal Life; and all the paſſages and accidents of it are in his hand alone, he hath alſo given me, and he maintains in me a ſpiritual Life, yea he is the Life of my Soul; it lives by union with him, as my Body does by union with it, and he hath laid up Life eternal for me. Would Chriſtians think thus indeed; The Light of this conſideration would diſpel their diſtruſtful fears; Certainly there is Atheiſm at the bottom of them; if not a denial nor a miſconceit of God, at leaſt a forgetfulneſs of God. *See Iſaiah* 51. *verſe* 12, 13. *I, even I am he that comforteth you: who art thou that thou ſhouldeſt be afraid of a Man that ſhall die, and of the Son of Man, which ſhall be made as Graſs, and forgetteſt the Lord thy Maker that hath ſtretched forth the Heavens, and laid the Foundations of the Earth,* &c. Conſider then that Men have no power of our preſent Life, but by the appointment of God, and beſide that we have another Life, which

is infinitely more precious than this, a Life ſpiritual, and which is the begining of eternal Life; and this is altogether out of their danger. *Col.* 3. 3. *Our Life is hid with Chriſt in God; It is hid.* And wicked Men cannot ſo much as ſee it, how then ſhould they take it from us, ſeeing it is hid, and that not meanly, it is hid *with Chriſt in God?* What then ſhall become of it? read the next *verſe*, and read it to your comfort, for there is abundance in it, if you look right upon it: *When Chriſt who is our Life ſhall appear, we likewiſe ſhall appear with him in Glory.* They that are in God, being united to him through Chriſt, can never by any power be ſeparated from him; it is an indiſſoluble union, death it ſelf, that is the great diſſolver of all other unions civil and natural, is ſo far from untying this, that it conſummates it, it conveys the Soul into the neareſt and fulleſt enjoyment of God who is its Life, where it ſhall not need to deſire that God would command or ſend his loving kindneſs, as it were at a diſtance, it ſhall be then at the Spring-head, and ſhall be ſatisfied with his Love for ever, *&c.*

SERMON, VII.

SERMON. VII.

PREFACE.

WHerefore do you ſpend money for that which is not Bread, and your labour for that which ſatisfies not? ſays the Prophet *Iſaiah*, 55. 2: All Men agree in this that they would willingly meet with ſome ſatisfying good, and yet if you look right upon the projects and labours of the greateſt part, ſhall find them flying from it, and taking much pains to be miſerable. And truly conſidering the darkneſs that's upon the Soul of Man, 'tis no great wonder to ſee theſe miſs their way, and continue wandring that hear not the voice of the Goſpel to recal them, and and ſee not its Light to direct them. But this is ſomewhat ſtrange, that where true happineſs, and the true way to it is propounded and ſet before Men, ſo few ſhould follow it in good earneſt. If the excellency of that good did not allure them, yet one would think that their many diſappointments in all other things ſhould drive them home to it. How often do we run our ſelves out of breath after ſhadows, and when we think we have overtaken them, and would lay hold on them, we find nothing, and yet ſtill we love to befool our ſelves, even againſt our own experience,

which we ſay, uſes to make Fools wiſer, ſtill we chuſe rather to ſhift from one vanity to another, than to return to that *Sovereign good*, that alone can fill the vaſteſt deſires of our Souls; rather to run from one *broken Ciſtern to another*, as the Prophet calls them, yea and to take pains to hew them out, than have recourſe to that *Fountain of living waters*. One main thing that makes Men thus rove and wander, is, that they do not reflect upon their own courſe nor themſelves, what's the main end they aim at, and then ſee whether their way be ſuitable to that end. If they would be happy, (as who would not) then ſure things that are empty, and uncertain, and certainly periſhing, will not ſerve the turn. And truly as this thought would be ſeaſonable at any time, ſo eſpecially to us in theſe times wherein beſides the common uncertainty of outward things, there is an apparent viſible hazard that Men's Lives and Fortunes are likely to be put to. Will you make advantage and gain of your trouble? Thus the looſer you find other things tied to you, and as it were upon a running knot, ſecure that one thing, and your portion in it, which is worth all the reſt, yea far above them all, and that alone which can be ſecured, and made certain; wanting this, what though you had Peace and Health, and all imaginable proſperity, you would ſtill be miſerable, being liable to the wrath of God, and eternal deſtruction. But if once united to Chriſt, and in him

him reconciled to God, and intitled to Heaven, what can fall amiſs to you? You ſhall have Joy in the midſt of Sorrow and Affliction, and Peace in the midſt of War, yea and Life in Death. But think not to attain this aſſurance, while you continue profane and godleſs, not ſeeking it in the way of Holineſs, for there alone it is to be found, and withal beg it of God by humble prayer.

Pſal. CXIX. 136.

Rivers of Waters run down mine eyes: becauſe they keep not thy Law.

LOve is the leading paſſion of the Soul, all the reſt follow the meaſure and motion of it, as the lower Heavens are ſaid to be wheel'd about with the firſt.

We have here a clear inſtance of it in the Pſalmiſt, teſtifying his love to God, by his eſteem and love of the Law or Word of God, what is each of the ſeveral *verſes* of this *Pſalm* but a ſeveral breathing, and vent of this love, either in it ſelf, or in the cauſes, or in the effects of it? where he ſets forth the excellencies and utilities of God's Law, there you have the cauſes of his love; his obſerving and ſtudying it, his deſire to know it more, and obſerve it better, theſe are the effects of his affection to it. The Love it ſelf he often expreſſeth *verſes* 47, 48, 113. and *verſe* 140.

Thy

Thy Word is pure, therefore thy Servant loveth it. And *verſe* 127. *I love thy Commandments above Gold, yea above fine Gold:* But as ſcarce accounting that love which can be uttered how much it is, *verſe* 97. He expreſſeth it moſt, by intimating that he cannot expreſs it; O *how I love thy Law!* Hence are his deſires (which are love in purſuit) ſo earneſt after it; Amongſt many, that is pathetical, *verſe* 20. *My Soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy Judgements at all times.* Hence likewiſe his Joy and Delight (which are love in poſſeſſion) *verſe* 14. *I have rejoyced in the way of thy Teſtimonies as in all riches*; And *verſe* 16. *I will delight my ſelf in thy Statutes; I will not forget thy Word.* We have his hatred of things oppoſite, which is loves antipathy, *verſe* 113. *I hate vain thoughts: but thy Law do I love.* And 163 *verſe, I hate and abhor lying: but thy Law do I love.* And in the 139 *verſe,* you ſhall find his zeal (which is no other but the fire of Love ſtirred up or blown into a flame) *My zeal hath conſumed me: becauſe mine Enemies have forgotten thy Words.* And (to omit the reſt) in the 158 *verſe,* his love to the Law ſhews its ſympathy in ſorrow, for the violation of the Law, *I beheld the Tranſgreſſors, and was grieved: becauſe they kept not thy Word.* And here you find this grief ſwelling to ſuch a heighth, that it runs over into abundant Tears. *Rivers of water run down mine eyes; becauſe they keep not thy Law.*

The words have briefly, *Theſe Rivers* in their

their channel and courſe, (*They run down mine eyes*) in their *Spring and Cauſe*, to wit his ſympathy with God's Law broken by Men in the latter clauſe of the *verſe*. *Becauſe they keep not thy Law*. But both together clearly Teach us, *That Godly Men are affected with deep ſorrow, for the Sins of the ungodly*.

More particularly conſider (1) The object of this Affection. (2) The nature of it. (3) The degree or meaſure of it: (4) its, Subject.

The *Object* is the Tranſgreſſion of the Law, or to take it (as in the Text) in *Concreto*, Men Tranſgreſſors of the Law. *They keep not thy Law*. It is true, the whole Creation groaneth under the burden of Sin in effects of it, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks; but Sin it ſelf, is Mans Enemy, he being that reaſonable Creature to whom the Law was given. Now in the general, it is matter of grief to a godly mind, to conſider the univerſal depravedneſs of Mans nature. That he is a *Tranſgreſſor from the Womb*. That *the carnal mind is enmity againſt God, not ſubject to his Law*, neither while it remains ſuch, can it be. *Rom*. 8. 6. And this grief will go the deeper, by remembring from whence he is fallen. When he was new come forth of the hands of his Maker, that Image of God that he ſtampt upon him, ſhined bright in his Soul; the whole frame of it was regular and comely, the inferiour faculties obeying the higher, and all of them ſubject unto God. But how ſoon

was

was he seduced, and then what a great change ensued? *Quantum mutatus ab illo?* There is ever since such a tumult, and confusion in the Soul, that it cannot hear the voice of God's Law, much less obey and keep it. Hence is that complaint of the Psalmist, oftener than once. *They are all gone out of the way, and become abominable, there is none that doth good, no not one.* Mundus immundus ἐν ἀδικίᾳ κεῖται *lies buried in it*, as the word is used in the inscription of Tombs ἐνθάδε κεῖται. Look abroad in the World. And what shall ye see, but a Sea of wickedness over the Face of the whole, which draws from a godly discerning eye that beholds it, these Rivers of Tears? The greatest part not knowing the true God, nor the true Religion, and the true way of his Worship; And for those that do, yet how unlike are they to it in their Lives; The reformed Churches this way, how unreformed in a great part!

But more particularly to branch this out a little in several sorts of Men; This godly grief is a very large Sphere, it will extend to remote people, remote every way, not only in place but in Manners and Religion, even to Heathens, and gross Idolaters; Yea, the very sins of Enemies, and of such as are profest Enemies to God, yet moves the tender-hearted Christian to sorrow and compassion. *Of whom I now tell you weeping, that they are Enemies to the Cross of Christ*, Philip. 3. 18. *Enemies*, and yet he speaks of them *Weeping*, what he writes

writes concerning them he would have written in Tears, if that had been legible. Thus you ſee the *extenſion* of this grief. But yet out of all queſtion it will be more *intenſive* in particulars of nearer concernment; it is the burden of the pious Mans heart, that his Law who made the World, and gives being to all things, ſhould be ſo little regarded, and ſo much broken through all the World, but yet more eſpecially that in his own Church amongſt his own people, Tranſgreſſion ſhould abound. Sins within the Church are moſt properly ſcandals, God manifeſts himſelf (ſo to ſpeak) moſt ſenſible of thoſe, and therefore the godly Man is ſo too. Whether they be the continual enormities of licentious and profane perſons, which are by external profeſſion in the face of the viſible Church, though indeed they be in it, but, as *Spots* and *Blemiſhes* as the Apoſtle ſpeaks; or whether it be the Apoſtaſie of Hypocrites, or (which ſometimes falls out) the groſs falls of true Converts. All theſe are the great grief of the Godly. The relations of Men either Natural or Civil will add ſomething too; this ſorrow will be greater than ordinary in a Chriſtian, he will melt in a particular tenderneſs for the Sins of his Kindred, Parents or Children, Husband or Wife; and moſt of all Miniſters for their people. How pathetically does this appear in St. *Paul* 2 *Cor.* 12. 21. *And leſt when I come again my God will humble me among you, and that I ſhall bewail many which have Sinned already,*

dy, and have not repented of the uncleanneſs and fornication, and laſciviouſneſs, which they have committed. A Man cannot but be more particularly touched with the ſins of that Nation, and of that City, and Congregation, and Family, whereof he is a Member, 2 *Pet.* 2. 8. (for that righteous Man dwelling among them, in ſeeing and hearing, *vexed his righteous ſoul, from day to day, with their unlawful deeds.*) The ſins of more eminent Perſons, either in Church or Commonwealth, will moſt affect a prudent Chriſtian, becauſe their inclinations and actions import the publick much; therefore the Apoſtle, when he had exhorted to Supplications and Prayers for all men, he particularly mentions *Kings*, and *ſuch as are in Authority.* And truly, when they are abuſed by Miſadvice and corrupt Counſel, ſome of theſe tears were very well ſpent, if poured forth before God in their behalf, for in his hand (as that wiſe King confeſſeth) are their hearts compared to Rivers of Waters; let their motion be never ſo impetuous, yet he turns them whither he pleaſeth, and who knows but theſe Rivers of Waters, theſe Tears, may prevail with the Lord to reduce the violent current of that River (a King's heart) from the wrong channel?

2. The Nature of it.

But to proceed: The ſecond thing to be conſidered in this affection, is the Nature of it, (1) It is not a Stoical apathy, and affected careleſſneſs, much leſs a delightful partaking with ſinful practices. (2) Not a proud ſetting off

off their own goodneſs, with marking the ſin of others, as the *Phariſee* did in the Goſpel. (3.) Not the deriſion, and mocking of the folly of men, with that laughing Philoſopher, it comes nearer to the temper of the other that wept always for it. It is not a bitter, bilious anger, breaking forth into Railings and Reproaches, nor an upbraiding Inſultation; nor is it a vindictive deſire of puniſhment, venting it ſelf in Curſes and Imprecations, which is the raſh temper of many, but eſpecially of the vulgar ſort. The Diſciples motion to Chriſt was far different from that way, and yet he ſays to them, *You know not of what Spirit ye are.* They thought they had been of *Elias* his Spirit, but he told them they were miſtaken, and did not know of what a Spirit they were in that motion. Thus heady Zeal often miſtakes and flatters it ſelf; we find not here a deſire of fire to come down from Heaven, upon the breakers of the Law, but ſuch a grief as would rather bring Water to quench it, if it were falling on them. *Rivers of Waters*, &c.

The degree of this ſorrow it's vehement, not a light tranſient diſlike, but a deep reſentment, ſuch as cauſeth not ſome few ſighs, or ſome drops of tears, but Rivers*. * *Palgi Maijim Pelagus aquarum.*

It is true, The *meaſure and degree* of ſorrow for Sin, whether their own or others, are different in divers Perſons, that are yet true mourners, and they are alſo different in the ſame Perſon, at divers times, not only upon 3. The Meaſure.

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the difference of the cauſe, but even where the cauſe is equal, upon the different influence and working of the Spirit of God. Sometimes it pleaſeth him to warm and melt the heart more abundantly, and ſo he raiſes theſe Rivers, in theſe Eyes, to a higher Tide than ordinary. Sometimes they remove again, but yet this Godly ſorrow is always ſerious and ſincere; and that's the other Quality here remarkable in it. It is not a Hiſtrionical weeping, only in publick, for the ſpeech is here directed to God, as a more frequent witneſs of theſe tears than any other, who is always the witneſs of the ſincerity of them, even when they cannot be hid from the Eyes of Men, for I deny not but they may, and ſhould have vent in publick, eſpecially at ſuch times as are ſet a part for ſolemn Mourning and Humiliation; yet, even then, uſually theſe ſtreams run deepeſt, where they're ſtilleſt and moſt quietly conveyed, but howſoever, ſure they would not be fewer, and leſs frequent alone, than in company, for that's a little ſubject to ſuſpition, *Jer.* 9. 1. *Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, for the ſlain of the daughter of my people.* And 13. 17. *But if ye will not hear it, my ſoul ſhall weep in ſecret places for your pride, and mine eye ſhall weep ſore, and run down with tears, becauſe the Lord's flock is carried away captive.*

4 The Subject. The *Subject* of this affection is, not the Ungodly themſelves that are profeſt tranſgreſſors

ſors of this Law, they rather make *a ſport of ſin*, as *Solomon* ſpeaks; they play and make themſelves merry with it, as the *Philiſtines* did with *Sampſon*, till it bring the Houſe down about their ears: But the Godly are they that are affected with this ſorrow, ſuch as are careful obſervers of the Law themſelves, and mourn firſt for their own breaches, for theſe are the only fit mourners for the tranſgreſſion of others.

Now to enquire a little into the *cauſe* of this, Why the breaking of God's Law ſhould cauſe ſuch ſorrow in the Godly, as here breaketh forth into abundant of Tears; we ſhall find it very reaſonable if we conſider, 1. The Nature of Sin, which is the tranſgreſſion or breach of the Law, as the Apoſtle defines it. 2. The Nature of this Sorrow and theſe Tears. 3. The Nature of the Godly.

1. Sin is the greateſt Evil in the World, yea, truly, (in compariſon) it alone is worth the Name of Evil, and therefore may juſtly challenge Sorrow, and the greateſt Sorrow; the greateſt of Evils it is, both *formally*, in that it alone is the defilement and deformity of the Soul, and *caſually*, being the root from whence all other Evils ſpring; the fruitful Womb that conceives and brings forth all thoſe miſeries that either Man feels, or hath cauſe to fear. Whence are all thoſe perſonal Evils incident to Men in their Eſtates, or in their Bodies, or Minds, outward Turmoils and Diſeaſes, and inward

Diſcontents, and Death it ſelf, in all the kinds of it? Are they not all the fruits of that bitter root? Whence ariſe theſe publick miſeries of Nations and Kingdoms, but from the Epidemick National Sins of the People, as the deſerving and procuring cauſe at God's Hand? And withal, oftentimes from the ambitious and wicked practices of ſome particular Men, as the working and effecting Cauſes, ſo that every way, if we follow theſe evils home to their original, we ſhall find it to be Sin, or the breaking of God's Law. Ungodly men, though they meddle not with publick affairs at all, yea, though they be faithful and honeſt in meddling with them, yet by reaſon of their Impious Lives, are Traytors to their Nation; they are truly the Incendiaries of States and Kingdoms: And theſe Mourners, though they can do no more, are the Loyalleſt and ſerviceable Subjects, bringing tears to quench the fire of Wrath, *Rivers of Waters.* And therefore, ſorrow and tears are not only moſt due to ſin, as the greateſt of evils, but they're beſt beſtowed upon it, if they can do any thing to its redreſs, becauſe that is both the ſureſt and moſt compendious way to remedy all the reſt, ſin being the ſource and ſpring of them all.

This is the reaſon why *Jeremiah* 9. *ver.* 1. when he would weep for the ſlain of his people, is ſtraightway led from that to bewail the ſin of his people, *ver.* 2, 3, *&c.* And in his

his Book of Tears and Lamentations, he often reduces all theſe ſad evils to Sin as cauſing them, particularly, *chap.* 5. 16. *The Crown is fallen from our Head, Woe unto us that we have ſinned.* He turns the complaint more to the Sin than to the Affliction.

Secondly, Conſider the Nature of theſe Tears; Tears ſpent for worldly Croſſes are all loſt: They run all to waſte; they are *Lachrymæ inanes*, empty fruitleſs things, but tears ſhed for the breach of God's Law, are the means to quench God's Wrath. The Prayers and Tears of ſome few, may avert the puniſhment of many, yea, of a whole Land, and if not ſo, yet are they not loſt, the Mourners themſelves have always benefit by them, as you have it in that known place, *Ezek.* 9. They that mourned for the common Abominations were *marked*, and the common Deſolation took not hold on them. This mourning for other Mens wickedneſs, both teſtifies and preſerves the Godly man's Innocence; I ſay it preſerves it, as well as teſtifies it; it keeps them from the Contagion of that bad Air they live in, for without this, Sin would ſoon grow familiar. It is good for men to keep up, and maintain in their Souls, a diſlike of Sin, for when once it ceaſeth, to be diſpleaſing to a Man, it will, ere long, begin to be pleaſing to him.

If we conſider the Nature of the Godly we ſhall ſee this mourning ſuit with it exceedingly, both in regard of his relation to God

and to man; God is his Father, and therefore it cannot but grieve him much to ſee him offended and diſhonored. Love to God, and conſequently to his Law, and love to Men, and deſire of their good, is the ſpring of theſe *Rivers*. A Godly man is tender of Gods Glory and of his Law, every ſtroke that it receives, ſtriketh his heart, and he hath bowels of compaſſion, and would be glad if they were converted and ſaved.

And he conſiders every Man as his Brother, and therefore is ſorrowful to ſee him run the hazard of periſhing in ſin. The former ſympathy, whereby the Godly man tenders the Glory of God, is from his Piety: This latter, whereby he pities the miſery of Man, is from his Charity; and from theſe flow the *Rivers, that run down his eyes.*

To be too ſenſible of worldly croſſes, and prodigal of tears, upon ſuch ſlight occaſions is little better than Childiſh or Womaniſh, but theſe tears that flow from love to God, and grief for Sin, have neither uncomlineſs nor exceſs in them; abundance of them, will beſeem any Man that is a Chriſtian: Let profane men judge it a weakneſs to weep for Sin, yet we ſee *David* do it. Men of Arms and Valour need not fear diſparagement by weeping thus, it is the trueſt Magnanimity to be ſenſible of the point of Gods honour, which is injured by Sin.

Again, The conſideration of this truth, will diſcover the World guilty of very much Ingra-

Ingratitude to Godly men; it hath always been the cuſtom of profane Perſons, to ſeek to brand Religion and Godlineſs with diſloyalty and turbulency, and to make it paſs for an enemy to the peace and proſperity of States and Kingdoms. You ſee clearly with what affection Religion furniſhes men, towards the publick, cauſing them to mourn for common ſins, and ſo to prevent (as far as in them lies) common Calamities. And this is of no little conſequence, for truly it is not Foreign Power, ſo much as Sin at home, that ruines Kingdoms: all the Winds that blow without the Earth, be they never ſo violent, ſtir it not, only that which is within its own bowels makes an Earthquake. It was a grave anſwer of *Epaminondas*, being asked what he was doing, ſolitary and penſive, in the time of ſolemn mirth and feaſting, *While my Country men* (ſays he) *are ſo peaceably Feaſting, I am thinking on the beſt means to preſerve that peace to them, that it may continue*; which, a little altered, is applicable to the Godly. They are oftentimes mourning for the ſins, and praying for the peace of the places where they live, when, in the mean time, the greateſt part are multiplying ſin, and ſo forfeiting their peace.

Rivers of Waters] This is a mournful melancholy life that theſe Preciſians lead, ſays the Worldling; yes, truly, if there were no more in it than what he can perceive and judge of. But beſides the full joy laid up for

them, and the beginnings of it here, there is even in this mourning an unknown ſweetneſs and delight. The Philoſopher ſays, even of common tears, that there is ſome kind of pleaſure in them, as ſome things pleaſe the taſte by their very tartneſs. But of theſe tears, they that know them, know it to be eminently true, That they are pleaſant. But be this exerciſe, as ſad as the profane call it, yet why obſerve they not, that they themſelves are much the cauſe of it, as they may read here, *Becauſe they keep not Gods Law*,

But to paſs by divers Inferences that the words afford, let us take notice of the duty here practiſed, and how much we are all obliged to the preſent practice of it. Who will deny that we have too much matter and occaſions of it? Beſides the ſorrow of *Sion*, and particularly, the blood-ſhedding, and diſtreſs of our Brethren, and our own danger, what corner of the Land, what rank or condition of people is there, that abounds not in groſs and heinous violation of Gods Law? *They keep not thy Law.* Magiſtrates and Judges turning Judgment into Gall and Wormwood, Miniſters remiſs in that great care, the care of Souls; people wallowing in Ungodlineſs and Uncleanneſs, Swearing, *&c.* The greater oppreſſing the leſs, and the leſs, defrauding and wronging the greater. No ſenſible and notable work of converſion, almoſt to be ſeen or heard of amongſt us, the Lord abſenting

ſenting himſelf from his Ordinances. O that he would dwell in his Houſe, and fill it with a Cloud of his Glory! What vile uncleanneſs and wantonneſs! What ſhameful drunkenneſs and exceſs! And ſome ſo far from mourning for others guiltineſs of this ſin, that they glory in making others guilty of it, and count it a paſtime to make others Drunk; and this is a far greater ſin than drunkenneſs it ſelf, for theſe men, while they make Beaſts of their Companions, they make Devils of themſelves, becoming tempters and provokers to Sin: If any ſuch be here, either tremble at the Woe that the Prophet *Habakkuk*, *chap.* 2. denounceth, or confeſs that you believe not the Scriptures. *Woe to him that gives his neighbour drink, and puts the bottle to him to make him drunken. The cup of the Lords right hand ſhall be turned to thee*; it is full of heavy vengeance: There is a Cup if you like it, to pay you home the Cups you give to others.

Again: How is the Land filled with Oaths and Curſings? How are your Streets, and almoſt all Companies, where a man can come, defiled, partly with tearing the Precious Name of God; partly with calling on the Devil. There would be no end of reckoning up all particulars; Sabbath breaking, Fraud and Covetouſneſs, Pride and Malice, and Envyings one of another; and the reſt. But the ſumm is this, An Univerſal want of the fear of God and his Law.

And the cauſe of this, is, in a great part, Ignorance of God, and of his Law; and truly, it is wonderful, under ſo much Light, and ſuch plentiful Preaching, to find ſo much darkneſs, not only in the skirts, and remote places, but even in the prime parts of this Land. Multitudes that are ſtrangers to the very principles and fundamentals of that Religion which they profeſs, and they that have knowledge, abuſing it, and ſinning againſt it, continuing in profaneneſs; and without this true Religion, it is as impoſſible to have renewed hearts and lives, as to have a Houſe without a Foundation, or, as we ſay, a Caſtle in the Air. And this Atheiſm and Ignorance amongſt people, is in a great part to be imputed to the corruption and ſloth of Miniſters, and would to God there were not many Congregations, not only altogether deſtitute, but ſuch as are freezing under a cold and lifeleſs Miniſtry.

You ſee then, we want not cauſes of mourning and humiliation, on all hands, but our want is inward, of that due diſpoſition for it, *Softneſs of heart*, and that *love to God*, which ſhould melt and mollifie the heart. Let us then ſtir up our ſelves, and one another, to this godly ſorrow, for the ſins of the Land; there is need of Rivers of Tears for theſe heaps of Sin, as they tell of his letting in a River to that monſtruous Stable of *Augias*, that could not otherwiſe have been cleanſed in the time allotted him.

And

And truly, as the duty lies upon all the faithful, the Miniſters of the Word ought to be moſt eminent in it, the chief mourners, the Precentors, to take up the Tune of theſe Thenes, *Joel* 2. 17. And all that wiſh the good of Church and Kingdom, ought to bear a part in them, according to their meaſure. Have we not much need to intreat reconcilement with God, that he prove not our enemy? Yes, ſurely, and were we reconciled with him, we would have little need to fear the power of Man.

Now they that would be profitable mourners for others ſins, by all means, muſt have theſe two conditions I mention'd; to be careful obſervers of the Law themſelves, and to mourn for their own failing, and breaking of it. Now to the obſerving of the Law, it is abſolutely needful to know and underſtand it, and that not only in the Letter and Superfice, but according to the Spiritual ſenſe and meaning of it, for without this knowledge, a man may light upon ſome Duty by gueſs, as it were in the dark; but obſerve, the Law he cannot. They are not only reproveable that glory in their own ſins, and make ſport of the ſins of others, but they miſtake it much, that think it enough to conſider their own with grief, and judge the ſins of others an impertinency for them to think on; they mourn not right for others that begin not at themſelves, ſo they mourn never aright for themſelves that end in themſelves. He that here

thus

thus weeps for others, made his Bed to ſwim with theſe Rivers, for his own ſin, *Pſal.* 6. (2) As a man muſt know this Law, ſo he muſt be inwardly convinced and perſwaded of the Divinity of it, that it's God's Law. (3) He muſt have a deep apprehenſion of the Majeſty and Authority of the Law-giver, to work Reverence, and of his goodneſs to beget Love; and the due mixture of theſe two, will both ſtrongly command, and ſweeten obedience to his Commandments. And this obedience, though it be not an abſolute and perfect fulfilling of any one of the Commandments, yet it is a reſpect to them all, as this Pſalm hath it, which is (ſo to ſpeak) an imperfect kind of perfection. And from this reſpect to the Law, which is the obſerving of it, will flow that other condition, of grieving when we break it.

And beſides all other things that ſhould make a Chriſtians own ſin grievous to him, there is one thing cannot but move him much, The conſideration of the ſorrow and ſufferings of Chriſt. To view the bleedings of the Lord Jeſus, cannot chuſe but pierce a Believing Soul, and make it ſay, Did my Redeemer ſhed his Blood for my ſins, and ſhall not I my ſelf ſhed tears for them? I know the natural Conſtitution of ſome denies them tears, but if it do ſo to any, make up that want with ſence of inward grief, and it is well enough, the Eye of God can diſcern that as well

well as the other? but truly, where men have tears for lighter cauſes (for all other cauſes are lighter) and none for this, they feel not yet the weight of ſin, except that want be through the deepneſs of ſorrow, which ſometimes will ſtop the current of tears, though it uſed to run, at other times; as they ſay, *Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes ſtupent.* But this is a rare and happy impediment.

And to anſwer another doubt: If you find ſometimes worldly griefs, ſtir you more violently, yet let this Godly ſorrow affect you more conſtantly, that it may have the advantage in continuance, if it fall ſhort in the degree.

But as this grief muſt begin at home, as they ſay of Charity, it muſt not be ſo ſelfiſh as to reſt there; and truly, where it comes in that order, it may be ſome way a ſtronger Evidence of ſincerity, to mourn for others ſins, than for our own, for there ſeems to be more of God in it, becauſe there is leſs in it of our ſelves, and own particular intereſt.

Now you will poſſibly think it but an unpleaſant Duty that you have heard urged all this while; but look forward, and conſider the iſſue of it. That which Chriſt ſpeaks in particular to his Diſciples, is generally true in all Chriſtians, *Jo.* 16. 20. *Ye ſhall weep and lament* (ſays he) *but the World ſhall rejoyce; ye ſhall be ſorrowful, but your ſorrow ſhall be turned or made into Joy.* The Water of thoſe tears ſhall be turned into Wine of Conſolation.

lation. The Traffick of theſe Rivers is gainful, they export Grief and import Joy. When theſe tears are called Seed, the Harveſt crop is called Joy. *They that ſow in tears ſhall reap in Joy.* They are here called *Rivers*, and they are anſwered with a River, *Pſal.* 86.8. for which they ſhall in end be perfectly exchanged. *Thou ſhalt make them drink of the river of thy pleaſures.* And *Revel.* 7.17. *The Lamb ſhall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of waters.* Here they run down the eyes, and water the cheeks; and there you read that God ſhall wipe them away from their eyes. Who would not be content to weep, to have God wipe away their tears with his own hand? Be ambitious then to be found amongſt the mourners in *Sion*, and when ye remove from this Valley of tears, God ſhall at once fully wipe away all the ſtain of Sin from your Souls, and all Tears for it from your Eyes. And as he ſhall wipe away the Tears with the one hand, he will ſet the Crown upon your Heads with the other.

SERMON,

SERMON VIII.

PREFACE.

Beſſed are they that dwell in thy Houſe, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, and he adds this reaſon, *They will be ſtill praiſing thee.* There is indeed, always in God's Houſe both fit opportunity and plentiful matter of his praiſes. But the greateſt number of thoſe that frequent his Houſe, do not dwell in it, their delight and affection is not there; Therefore they cannot praiſe him, they come in as ſtrangers, and have no skill of the Songs of praiſe, yea and the very Children of the Family, that Worſhip in Spirit and in Truth, find their inſtruments (their hearts) very often, quite out of tune for praiſes, and ſometimes moſt of all, when praiſes are requiſite. They find ſtill ſuch abundant cauſe of complaint in themſelves, weighing down their Spirits, that they can hardly at all wind them up, to magnifie that God of our mercy, which is far more abundant. If we would take a reflex view and look back upon our carriage this day in the preſence of our God, who is among us, that would not find much work for ſad thoughts? Would not one find that he had a hard and ſtony heart? another a light unconſtant

ſtant wandring heart to complain of? A third and unbelieving heart; and ſome all of theſe? And they (if ſuch there be) that have both deeply ſorrowed, and been largely comforted will poſſibly for all that, upon former ſad experience, be full of Fears and Jealouſies, that this ſweet temper will not be of long continuance, that ere long the World, or ſome Luſt, will find, or make a way to creep in, and baniſh thoſe Heavenly thoughts, and trouble that Peace and Joy which accompanies them. Yet notwithſtanding all theſe cauſes of grief or fear, our cauſes of praiſe are both more and greater, and it is no reaſon that the ſenſe of our own evil, ſhould prejudge that acknowledgment of God's goodneſs, yea rather it ſhould ſtir us up to extol it ſo much the more. Ceaſe not to bemoan the evils of your own hearts; but withal forget not to magnifie the riches of his grace, who hath given himſelf for you, and to you. Theſe two will not hinder one another, but the due intermixture of them will make a very good harmony. And the fruit of them will be this, you ſhall have ſtill more cauſe to praiſe and leſs to complain. When the Lord ſhall find you humble acknowledgers of his grace, he will delight to beſtow more grace upon you, and will ſubdue thoſe iniquities for you, which you cannot; and though he is pleaſed to do it but gradually by little and little, yet in the end, the conqueſt ſhall be full; and then he who is the Author and Finiſher of your Faith, tho'

it

t is his own work, yet becauſe it is done in you, he ſhall account the Victory yours, as obtained by you, and give you as Conquerors the Crown of Glory, *To him that overcometh* (ſaith he) *will I give to ſit with me in my Throne*, &c.

There is nothing here but from free grace, the courage and ſtrength to fight in this Spiritual warfare, the victory by fighting, and the Crown by Victory, flow all from that Fountain. In all theſe things we are more than Conquerors (ſaith the Apoſtle) but how? *Through him that loved us.* Therefore if we deſire to be ſuch, let us humble our ſelves before the Throne of grace intreating both for grace and glory in the Name of Chriſt our Mediator.

Cant. I. 3.

Becauſe of the Savour of thy good Ointments,
Thy Name is as Ointment poured forth,
Therefore do the Virgins love thee.

THE natural workings and deſires of things are agreeable to their being. The Beaſts according to their ſenſitive Life ſeek thoſe things that tend to the good and preſervation of that Life, and affect nothing higher than thoſe, and they are ſatisfied. Man, (except ſuch as are in the loweſt Stage and border upon the Beaſts) finds Nature, even corrupt Nature,

ture, raiſing him to higher deſires and deſigns. And yet of the beſt of them, the Apoſtles maxim holds true, *They that are after the Fleſh mind the things of the Fleſh*, and yet he ſubjoins, the excellency of ſome Men beyond the beſt naturaliſt, *They that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 5. They muſt be confined to things natural, but are ſtrongly moved towards Spiritual bleſſings, and Chriſt the Sum of them. And having once taſted of his ſweetneſs can ſay, *Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good Ointments*, &c. They that are elevated to a ſupernatural Being, can admit nothing into competition with his love, and this it is that lies under theſe words, *Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good Ointments*, &c.

Numbers have promiſcouſly been his gueſts at this time, and the greateſt number think they came to good purpoſe; but know that you are ſo far from partaking of Chriſt in the Sacrament, that you have not ſo much as ſmelt his Perfumes; if you be not ſtrongly taken with his love. Great are the Praiſes, and many the Duties you owe him for ſo rich favours; and therefore ſhew your good will, and endeavour ſome payment. But know that none of them are current except they be ſtampt with *Love*, if you love not, you do nothing, all your Labours and Services without it, are as ſo many Cyphers, they amount to juſt nothing. And with it, the meaneſt of them will find acceptance.

You

You have briefly in the words, *Christ's loveliness, and the Christians love*; the former the cause of the latter, both couched under borrowed Terms, according to the whole strain of this allegorical Song, to which the true Experimental knowledge of this Divine love is the best Commentary.

In all Love, Three things are necessary: (1) Some goodness in the object, either true and real, or apparent and seeming to be so; for the Soul be it never so evil, can affect nothing but what it takes some way to be good. (2) There must be a knowledge of that goodness; for the most excellent things, if altogether unknown, affect not. (3) There must be a suitableness or agreement of that good thing with the nature of those which should affect it; otherwise indeed how good soever it is, it is not good to them.

Now all these we have clearly in this Love. (1) The goodness, the excellency of Christ expresst by *precious Ointments*. (2) The manifestation and making of it known, signified by *the pouring forth of his Name*. (3) His fitness, and congruity with them here mentioned, under this denomination *Virgins*; such as have the senses of their Souls, not stopt with the pollutions of the World, but Pure and Active, and (therefore as the Apostle speaks, *Heb.* 5. 14.) *exercised to discern good and evil*, These three requisites thus happily met, must needs produce Love. *Therefore the Virgins love thee.*

Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good Ointments.] How true is the Apoſtles word, when he calls Chriſt the Believers *All things*, and that radical grace of Faith, becauſe it apprehends Chriſt hath a kind of univerſality; and it is reaſonable too, it alone being to the Soul, what all the five ſenſes are to the Body. It is the eye and the Mouth, a wonderful Eye; *It ſees him that is inviſible*, Heb. 4. 27. The Mouth, *it taſtes that the Lord is gracious*, 1 Pet. 2. 3. Yea, take theſe two both together in one place, *Pſal.* 34. 8. *O taſte and ſee that the Lord is good.* 'Tis the Souls Ear, for what elſe is meant, when it is ſaid, *He that hath an Ear to hear let him hear*; And was it not that touch which Chriſt took ſpecial notice of, and with good reaſon diſtinguiſhed it from the common touch of the multitude that was crowding about him; That touch alone draws vertue from him, *Some hath touched me, for there is a vertue gone out of me.* And laſtly, as it is all thoſe other ſenſes, and Chriſt its object in Reference to them all; ſo here in its *Smelling*, it finds the ſavour of his fragrant graces and by that works love, *Becauſe of the ſavour*, &c.

What ſtrange odds is there betwixt the opinion of Chriſt's Spouſe, and the World, that knows him not? They wonder what ſhe ſees in him deſirable; ſhe wonders that they are not all raviſht with his excellencies. They prefer the baſeſt vanities in the World before him; ſhe finds the choiceſt and richeſt things in

in the World too mean to reſemble the ſmalleſt part of his worth. See in this Song how buſily and skilfully ſhe goes to all the Creatures, and Crops the rareſt peices in Nature and Art to ſet forth her well Beloved, and ſeems to find them all too poor for her purpoſe; one while ſhe extols him above all things beautiful, and pleaſant to the Eye Another while above things delectable to the taſte, as in the former *verſe, Thy Loves are better than Wine,* and here prefers the Perfume of his Graces to the moſt precious Ointments.

When a natural eye looks upon the Sacrament, to wit of the Lord's Supper, it finds it a bare and mean kind of Ceremony. Take heed there be not many, that come to it, and partake of it with others, that prize it little, have but low conceits of it, and do indeed find as little in it as they look for. But oh! What precious Conſolation and Grace doth a Believer meet with at this Banquet; how richly is the Table furniſht to his eye; what plentiful varieties employ his Hand and Taſte? what abundance of rare dainties? yet there is nothing but one here, but, that one is all things to the Believing Soul, it finds his love is ſweeter than the richeſt Wine to the Taſte, or beſt Odours to the ſmell; and that delightful Word of his, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee,* is the only Muſick to a diſtreſſed Conſcience.

Thy good Ointments.] The holy Ointment of the Sanctuary under the Law was compoſed according to God's own preſcription, *Exod.*

30. 25. And they were ſtraitly forbid to imitate it, or make any like it, to ſignifie the ſingular holineſs, the matchleſs worth of the anointing Oyl of gladneſs, wherewith our high Prieſt, the Lord Jeſus, was anointed above his fellows. And in this he is incomparable, that his Ointment he hath not from without. It was his own Divine Nature that perfumed his Manhood with theſe precious Ointments. God and the Spirit of the Lord, is ſaid to have anointed him. *Pſal.* 45. 7, *Thou loveſt righteouſneſs and hateſt wickedneſs: therefore God, thy God hath anointed thee with the Oyl of gladneſs above thy fellows*; and *Iſaiah* 61. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the Meek*, &c. But know that that Spirit, and the Father are one in Eſſence with the eternal Son. In that myſtical Song much like to this, in the 45 *Pſalm* at the 8*th. verſe*, *It is ſaid that his Garments ſmell of* Myrrh, *and* Aloes, *and* Caſſia *as he comes forth of his Ivory Palaces*: When he came down from his glorious Court above to dwell among Men, he apparell'd himſelf like them; he was Clothed with humane Fleſh. But yet that veſture was ſo tranſcendently enriched with all graces as with coſtly perfumes, that Men might eaſily know there was more under them then a meer Man, yea even in that low Eſtate did ſuch beams of his Glory ſhine through, that all whoſe eyes were open, did clearly behold them, and knew him to be no leſs than the only begotten Son of

of God, by this, that *he was ſo full of Grace and Truth*, *Jo.* 1. 14. And theſe are in a word, theſe precious Ointments, whoſe delightful ſmell is here commended.

Now to enumerate and deſcribe theſe Graces, what Tongue of Men, yea or of Angels were ſufficient? What other is the main ſubject of the whole Scriptures? what mean all the Figures, and Ceremonies of the Law; the coſtly Furniture and Ornaments of the Temple; the rich veſtments of the high Prieſt; that fine Linnen, that Silk and Gold, theſe Gems and precious Stones? was any of them, were they all any other but Shadows and dim Reſemblances of the matchleſs perfections of Jeſus Chriſt? 'Tis ſtrange, that Chriſtians have ſo low conceits of their high Redeemer! What is the Goſpel, but a more clear and plentiful pouring forth of thoſe Ointments? What was the great Labour and Buſineſs of the holy Apoſtles, but the diffuſing of Chriſt's Graces through the World? *I determined to know nothing among you ſave Chriſt and him Crucified*, ſays St. *Paul* to his *Corinthians*. What was that other Sacrament and this, but Coverts under which Chriſt conveys himſelf and his Graces to the Believing Soul, while the prophane and ſlight hearted Receivers are ſent away with empty Elements? Thus you ſee how ample a Subject theſe graces are in the general. And truly the Conſideration of any one particular of them might be the employment of many hours.

Would you hear the wiſdom of Chriſt; look what the Apoſtle ſays of it, *Col.* 2. 3, *In him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge.* Not ſome drops of wiſdom, no, nor Streams, but a Fountain: A Treaſure, not one Treaſure, but Treaſures; many, yea, all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge, yet not obvious to every eye, but, as Treaſures, are hid. The Children of Wiſdom, which are the Worlds Fools, have ſome knowledge of this his Wiſdom, and draw from it for their own uſe; but to ſound the depth of it, who can be able?

No leſs admirable is his Holineſs, he is both the Immaculate Lamb, and the Undefiled Sacrifice, ſuch a High Prieſt became us: *Became us!* Yes, *Holy, Harmleſs and Undefiled, Heb.* 7. 26. The more we were defiled with ſin, the more ſtood we in need of an undefiled and ſpotleſs High Prieſt; it was as expedient, that he ſhould be unlike us in that, as that he ſhould be like us in all other things. Therefore, as for the Legal Prieſthood, there was a Holy Conſecrating Oyl, This Immortal High Prieſt was Anointed with moſt entire and compleat Holineſs; and this perfect Holineſs of his, is ſet forth as Myrrh, the beſt Ointments and Spices, *Myrrh* (which is of a vertue preſervative from Corruption.) He was not only of excellent ſmell, while he lived among men, but this Myrrh did likewiſe preſerve and exempt him from contracting any corruption or pollution, by the bad

bad air of ſinful Company; ſo that he converſed with Sinners, that he might Convert them without any danger of infection. And as he was thus extraordinarily Anointed with the Spirit of Wiſdom and Holineſs, ſo likewiſe with the Spirit of Meekneſs, therefore called *The Lamb of God, that taketh away the ſins of the World*: His *voice was not heard in the ſtreets.* And take in that other Grace, which he himſelf mentions, together with his Meekneſs, as being near in Nature to it, *Humility*; *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart*, Matth. 11. 29. Indeed, Humility is an odoriferous Grace, it is a gracing decoring Grace, and it adds a kind of ſweetneſs and luſtre to all other Graces; yea, it ſerves ſingularly as a Character for the trial of the truth of all other Graces. As Balſam, which is the chief of precious Ointments, uſed to be tried, That is the trueſt and beſt, that put into any Liquor, goes to the bottom, that but ſlight which ſwims above; ſo theſe Graces are moſt upright, that are accompanied with moſt humility. And that this may be out of doubt, you know that Jeſus Chriſt (of whom we now ſpeak) as he had moſt Grace, ſo was he moſt exemplary in humility; and certainly, the ſweet ſmell of this good Ointment, did fill the whole Houſe, when he waſht his Diſciples, feet, *Jo.* 13. as it is ſaid of the Ointment that *Mary* poured upon his feet, in the foregoing Chapter, *Joh.* 12.

To *Baal Shemin.*

Amongſt many other of his gracious Qualities that might be mentioned, there is one we cannot but take particular notice of His *Love*, the rather, becauſe the fragrant ſmell of his Graces is here ſaid to beget Love. Now you know that one of the ſtrongeſt attractives of *Love*, is *Love*, *Magnes amoris amor*, ἔρως ἔρων τικτει. What made him empty himſelf of his Glory, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, but becauſe he was full of love? What made him take on the form of a Servant, ſuffer Heat and Cold, and Hunger, and Poverty, but Love? What other was it made him digeſt the Perſecutions Revilings, and the contradiction of Sinners, but Love? But the great wonder of his Love is this, He died to become our Life; *who hath loved me, and given himſelf for me*, ſays the great Apoſtle St. *Paul*. And *hereby perceive we the love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us*, ſays the beloved Apoſtle St. *John*. Was it the Nails that held him faſt to the Croſs, when they tauntingly bid him come down? No, it was his *Love*, that was ſtronger than Death. But all this was nothing to the angry countenance of his Father, nor would he ever have ventured upon that, if infinite Love had not perſwaded him; no wonder if the Apoſtle call it a Love that paſſeth knowledge. *That you may know*, ſaith he, *the love of Chriſt which paſſeth knowledge*, Eph. 3. 19. Know it we may, and ſhould, but we muſt know withal, that we cannot know it fully.

And

And this is our comfort, that it is greater than we can comprehend, for if it were not ſo, it would be leſs than we ſtand in need of. So much of his Love we may underſtand, as may abundantly inflame our hearts with love to him; for this purpoſe hath he revealed it, and made his Name like an Ointment poured out. And that's the ſecond thing.

His Name] That's the report and manifeſtation of his Excellencies; and if you will take it properly of his Name *Jeſus*, and *Chriſt*, or the *Meſſiah*, it is true of them, for they are ſignificative of theſe Excellencies. Ask an afflicted Conſcience, if Jeſus, that is, a Saviour, be not a precious Word, that hath a Sovereign value, both a refreſhing ſmell, and a healing vertue. The Hammer of the Law may break a ſtony heart in pieces, but it is only the blood of Jeſus that can ſoften it; and where it is effectually poured, either upon a wounded Soul, it heals it, or upon a hard heart, it mollifies it. For that other Name, *Chriſt*, well may it be called an Ointment poured out, for it ſignifies his Anointing, and that the ſweet ſavour of this Name may effect, read but that one paſſage, *Iſai.* 61. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings*, &c. What ineſtimable riches of Conſolation is there in each of theſe effects, to which Chriſt was Anointed, and yet we find not a word among them all for a proud ſtiff-necked Sinner. Here are *good tidings*,

tidings, but it is to the *meek*; comfortable *binding up*, but it is for the *broken hearted*; *Liberty*, but it is for *Captives* and *Priſoners*, groaning under their Chains, and deſirous to be delivered. Not for ſuch as delight in their bondage, there is *Oil of joy* and *garments of praiſe*, but they are provided for *mourning dejected Spirits* that need them; not to the Impediment. On the contrary, there is a terrible word interjected in the midſt of theſe Promiſes, *The day of vengeance of our God*; and that is the portion of Chriſt's Enemies, and ſuch are all incorrigible ſinners.

Thus it is, at the ſame Banquet from which you come, one may be filled with Spiritual Joy, and the very Perſon that ſits next, be filled with a ſecret Curſe, and return more miſerable than he came. But let the diſconſolate lamenting Sinner lift up his head, and behold Chriſt, the Son of God, anointed a *Prophet* to preach Salvation, and liberty to ſuch; a *Prieſt* to purchaſe it, and a *King* to give it.

Now the pouring out of this Name is divers. Before the coming of the Meſſiah his Name was poured out in Propheſies and Promiſes, in Types and legal Ceremonies, but more fully when the *Word was made fleſh*, then Angels and holy Men, yea, and Women, ſpake clearly of him. What was his Fathers voice at his Baptiſm? The Holy Ghoſts deſcending? What was his own Preaching, and Miracles, and Converſation, but all the

the pouring forth of his precious Name? And in his Sufferings and Death, what think you? Was not his Name then poured forth, yea, his Blood with it? Yes, truly, being extended on the Croſs, and his Body pierced in divers place; his precious Ointments were ſhed abroad towards all the Quarters of the World; their ſmell both reached Heaven and the viſible Earth. God the Father (as he was ſaid to do in *Noahs*, Sacrifice) did much more ſmell in his Sacrifice, a ſavour of reſt, appeaſing his wrath, and all Believers a ſavour of peace, a quieting of their Conſciences. And as Aromatick Spices, when they are pounded out and beaten, ſend forth their ſweet ſmells moſt liberally, ſo in theſe his Sufferings, did the *obedience*, *patience* and *love*, and all the Graces, and the Name of our Saviour, moſt clearly manifeſt themſelves to the World. After he was Dead they Embalmed his Body, but they knew not that his own Vertue would do more than all the Ointments and Spices in the World could do, not only by preſerving his Body from Corruption, but by raiſing it the third day. And truly, after his Reſurrection, his own Diſciples knew his Name better than ever before, and yet more fully after his *Aſcention*, when the Holy Ghoſt came down upon them, which was poured from Heaven on them, for this very end, That they might pour forth Chriſt's Name to the ends of the Earth, *Act.* 2. 8. And they did ſo, carrying this

this precious Treaſure in Earthen Veſſels, as that Elect Veſſel St. *Paul* ſpeaks. And ever ſince, God hath continued the pouring forth of this Name, by the Miniſtry and Preaching of the Goſpel. 'Tis true, there are too many of thoſe, that are employed in this work, that ſeek themſelves, and their own ends, rather than his Glory whom they Preach. And they that are more upright, the very beſt of them are ſinful Men, but how mean and unworthy ſoever they be, deſpiſe not the Goſpel; let the ſweet Name, which they pour forth, prevail for it ſelf, that ſo you may reverence and love it, if you would have Salvation by it; and there is no other Name under Heaven, by which that can be obtained.

As this Name is poured forth in the Goſpel Preached, ſo in the Sacraments annexed to it; and particularly in this, when the Bread is broken, and the Wine poured out. And was not this the earneſt deſire of the Receivers of it this day, it ſhould have been, to have our ſhare in it, for the refreſhment and curing of our Souls? Nor ſhall any that came thus, be diſappointed; and if not preſently, yet moſt certainly, and that in due time they ſhall find the ſweet fruits of it.

You have heard many ways how the Name of Chriſt is poured out, yet there is one more, without which all the reſt are ineffectual: It is this, The ſecret and powerful working of the Spirit of God in the Soul. The Ordinances and means of Salvation, do indeed,

indeed, pour forth the Name of Chriſt round about a Man, but till the Spirit concur with them, not one drop falls within the Soul; and is he not ſo much the more miſerable, that hears much of Chriſt, and partakes nothing of him? Yes, ſurely, a Man may have much common knowledge of Chriſt, and may underſtand well, yea, may Preach well, concerning his Worth and Graces, and yet not *love him.* But there is a particular knowledg of him by the Infuſion of the Spirit, and where the ſmalleſt meaſure of this is, it preſently wins the affection. There is *a ſhedding abroad of the love of God in our hearts,* that the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, *Rom.* 5. 5. and this draws us after him, for our love to God is nothing elſe but the reflexion of his love to us. So then, though many hear of Chriſt, yet becauſe there are but few that have this ſpecial knowledge of him, therefore it is, that ſo few do truly eſteem of him, and love him, and they are ſuch as are here called Virgins: And that's the third thing.

The Virgins] Similitude and Conformity of Natures begets Friendſhip; pure Affections delight in a pure Object, and makes them ſuch, for the truth is, Chriſt doth not find men naturally ſuitable to himſelf, but as he took on our Nature, ſo he waſheth away the ſinfulneſs of our Nature, which he took not on, and makes us that way conformable to his Nature; and they that are ſo changed, though they were formerly lovers of Sin, yet

yet by Converſion, which is called Regeneration, they are born again, and ſo become not only Chaſte, but even Virgins, ſpiritually; for by Virgins, here are not meant ſuch as Romiſh Votaries fancy them to be: No, this Virginity may well conſiſt with any lawful State of Life.

Theſe Virgins are ſuch as be truly Holy, and pure in Heart, and Life, who though they are not perfectly free from all ſin, yet have they affection to no ſin; theſe are ſingularly delighted with the ſmell of Chriſt's Name and Graces, while the Voluptuous Perſon, and the Prophane Worldling, diſlikes and deſpiſes it. The Virgins, they beſtow their affection whole and entire upon Chriſt.

Balſamus ſic ſutibus ſic male nardus olent.

How groſly do you delude your ſelves, that make your hearts Dens of Pride, filthy Luſt, Malice, and Envy, and thouſands of Vanities, and yet think to find a corner in them to lodge Chriſt too? Truly, you would both ſtraiten him in room, and give him very bad Neighbours. No, they that think not a whole heart too little for him, ſhall never enjoy him.

The Virgins love thee] Grace deſtroys not the natural paſſions of the Soul, but corrects them only by deſtroying their Corruption, and ſo they become not only not contrary to Grace, but are made the ſubject and ſeat of Grace. This of Love, which is the chief of them, we ſee it aboliſheth not, but rectifies it, recalling it to its due object, and turning

turning it into the right channel, by which it may empty it ſelf into the Ocean of Goodneſs.

And this love may well conſiſt with the purity of Virgins, yea, it is this love that purifies and makes them ſuch. The Virgins love, but whom? *Thee*; and it is as reaſonnable a love as it is pure. Therefore *they love thee*, becauſe thou haſt made them, in ſome meaſure, apprehenſive of thy worth, which commands the love of all that know it; not a cold and indifferent affection, but a ſuperlative ardent love, far over-topping all their other deſires: And good reaſon, ſince Chriſt doth infinitely, and beyond all compariſon ſurpaſs all other things deſirable. Ask your own hearts if you love Chriſt thus, for if not thus, you love him not at all. The Apoſtle St. *Paul*'s love, was of this ſize, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8. *But what things were gain to me, thoſe I counted loſs for Chriſt; yea, doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord, for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Chriſt.* Thus love will not only undergo difficulties and ſufferings for Chriſt, without either repining or fainting, but it will even be glad to meet with them, as opportunity is, to exerciſe and teſtifie it ſelf; hard things will ſeem moſt eaſie for his ſake, and bitter things exceeding ſweet. In a word, To him that loves, ſcarce any thing is impoſſible. Love

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is the leading paſſion of the Soul, all the reſt conform themſelves to it, *Deſire* and *Hope, and Fear, Joy and Sorrow*. If then, you love Chriſt, the deſires and breathings of your Soul after him, are ſtrong and earneſt, if he withdraw himſelf, or appear angry; if either you ſee him not, or ſee him look diſcontented, your grief will be ſo deep that it cannot be allayed by any worldly imployments: yet upon ſome former tokens of his love, which is known to be unchangeable, Hope will uphold the Soul, till the beams of his Grace ſcatter the Cloud, and break through. Though our *Joſeph* ſeem ſtrange, and ſpeak roughly for a while, he cannot long refrain diſcovering his affection. Again, love you him, unſpeakable will be your joy when he ſmiles upon you; as great will be your delight in poſſeſſion, as your deſire is in purſuit: And while you have his preſence, it will be too hard a task for any affliction to diſmay you. Have you, indeed, heard Chriſt ſpeak comfortably to you this day at his Holy Table? How will this enable the Soul, and arm it againſt dangers, and diſtracting diſtruſtful fears? *Perfect love caſteth out fear*, ſaith St. *John*, that is, all baſe and ſervile fear; but there is one fear that's in no heart but where love begets it, *fear to offend*. You know how wary and loth men are naturally to diſpleaſe thoſe they love, therefore it is, that love to Chriſt, and a careful obſerving of his Commandments, are

are inſeparable Companions; yea, Love it ſelf is the *fulfilling of the Law*, for it gives up the heart to God, and conſequently the whole man. Then there is no return of duty which your receiving of Chriſt calls for, (and what doth it not call for) there is none (I ſay) but is compriſed under this one of *Love*. Do you owe him praiſes? Yes, ſurely; then *love him*, that will ſtir you up to praiſe him. You never knew, but where much love was in the heart, it made the tongue ready and active upon all occaſions to praiſe the party loved. Love will entertain ſmall courteſies with great thanks, much more where the benefit ſo far exceeds all poſſible thankfulneſs. Ought you to ſerve and obey him? Doubtleſs he hath for that purpoſe redeemed you with his precious Blood. And truly there is no obedience nor ſervice, ſo full and ſo cheerful, as that which flows from love. Should you ſtudy conformity to Chriſt, and labour to be like him? Yes, for this is to walk worthy of Chriſt; then there is nothing aſſimulates ſo much as Love. Men delight in their ſociety whom they love, and by their ſociety they do inſenſibly contract their cuſtoms, and become like them. Theſe Virgins that love Chriſt for his Graces, they love to converſe with him, and by converſing with him, they receive of his Graces, and have a ſmell of his Perfumes. Not only do they by the ſmell of his Garments, or ſuch impoſed Rights,

obtain the bleſſing; but likewiſe ſmell like him by the participation of ſanctifying Grace, of his Wiſdom and Holineſs, in a pure and godly Converſation, abſtaining from the impure Luſts and Pollutions of the World, of his Meekneſs and Humility: Never think that one and the ſame Soul can have much Pride and much of Chriſt; ever the more Grace a man hath, the more ſenſe hath he likewiſe of his own unworthineſs, and Gods free mercy, and conſequently, the more humility. If you love Chriſt, you cannot chuſe but be like him in love to your Brethren. This is expreſly compared, by the *Pſalmiſt*, to the precious Ointment poured upon *Aaron*'s head, that ran down to the very skirts of his Garments. Our Head, and High Prieſt, the Lord Jeſus, hath incomparably teſtified his love to Believers, whom he is pleaſed to call his Brethren; they are far from equalling him, either in love to him, or one to another, but they do imitate him in both: This is his great Commandment, That we *love one another, even as he loved us*, which is expreſt both as a ſtrange motive, and a high example. 'Tis not poſſible that a Spirit of Malice, and implacable Hatred, can conſiſt with the love of Chriſt. Finally, ſhould you be ready to ſuffer for Chriſt? Yes: Then love is that which will enable you; and if you were inflamed with this fire, then, though burned for him, that fire would only conſume your droſs, and be ſoon extinguiſhed

guiſhed, but this would endure for ever.

By theſe and the like Evidences, try whether you indeed love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and by theſe fruits. You that profeſs to love him, teſtifie the ſincerity of your love; and be aſſured, that if you be now found amongſt theſe Virgins that love him, you ſhall one day be of the number of thoſe Virgins that are ſpoken of *Rev.* 14. 3, 4. that ſing a new Song before the Throne of God.

If you hate the defilements of the World, and be not polluted with inordinate affection to the Creature, it ſhall never repent you to have made choice of Chriſt; he ſhall fill your hearts with peace, and joy in believing. When you come to his Houſe and Table, he ſhall ſend you home with Joy and ſweet Conſolation, ſuch as you would not exchange with Crowns and Scepters; and after ſome few of theſe running Banquets here below, you ſhall enter into the great Marriage Supper of the Lamb, where Faith ſhall end in ſight, and Hope in poſſeſſion, and Love continue in perpetual and full Enjoyment, where you ſhall be never weary, but for ever happy, in beholding the face of the Bleſſed Trinity. To whom be Glory. *Amen.*

SERMON, IX.

PREFACE.

HOW true is that word of our Saviour, who is truth it ſelf, *Without me ye can do nothing*, ſevered from me, as that branch that is not in me: They that are altogether out of Chriſt in Spiritual Exerciſes do nothing at all. 'Tis true, they may Pray, and hear the Word, yea, and Preach it too, and yet in ſo doing they do nothing, nothing in effect. They have the matter of good actions, but it is the eternal Form gives being to things; they are but a number of empty words, and a dead ſervice to a living God, for all our outward performances and worſhip of the Body is nothing but the body of worſhip, and therefore nothing but a Carkaſs, except the Lord Jeſus, by his Spirit, breath upon it the breath of life. Yea, the Worſhipper himſelf is Spiritually Dead, till he receive Life from Jeſus, and be quickned by his Spirit. If this be true, then it will follow neceſſarily, That where numbers are met together, (as here) pretending to ſerve and worſhip God, yet he hath very few

few that do ſo indeed, the greateſt part being out of Chriſt; and ſuch, being without him, they can do nothing in his ſervice.

Rom. VIII. 7.

Becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God; for it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.

THE ordinary workings and actions of Creatures, are ſuitable to their Naure, as the aſcending of light things, and the moving of heavy things downwards; ſo the vital and ſenſitive actions of things that have life and ſenſe. The reaſonable Creature, 'tis true, hath more liberty in its actions, freely chuſing one thing and rejecting another, yet it cannot be denied, that in acting of that liberty, their choice and refuſal follow the ſway of their nature and condition, as the Angels and glorified Souls, their nature being perfectly holy, and unalterably ſuch. They cannot ſin, they can delight in nothing but in obeying and praiſing that God, in the enjoyment of whom their happineſs conſiſteth; ſtill raviſh'd in beholding his face. The Saints again, that have not yet reach'd that home, and are but on their Journey, they are not fully defecated, and refined from

the droſs of Sin; there are in them two parties, *Natural Corruption*, and *Supernatural Grace*, and theſe keep a ſtrugling within them; but the younger ſhall ſupplant the elder. Grace ſhall in the end overcome, and in the mean while, though it be not free from mixture, yet it is predominant. The main bent of a renewed Man, is Obedience and Holineſs, and any action of that kind he rejoyces in, but the Sin, that eſcapes him, he cannot look upon but with regret and diſcontent. But alas! they that be ſo minded, are very thin ſown in the World, even in Gods peculiar Fields, where the Labourage of the Goſpel is, and the outward profeſſion of true Religion unanimouſly received. Yet the number of true Converts, Spiritual-minded Perſons, is very ſmall, the greateſt part acting Sin with delight, and taking pleaſure in Unrighteouſneſs, living in diſobedience to God, as in their proper Element; and the reaſon is, The contrariety of their Nature to our Holy Lord. *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God.*

The mind φρόνημα] Some render it the *Prudence* or *Wiſdom* of the Fleſh. Here you have it, The *Carnal Mind*, but the word ſignifies, indeed, an act of the mind, rather than either the faculty it ſelf, or the habit of Prudence in it, ſo as it diſcovers what is the frame of both thoſe. The minding, as it is uſed, infr. *ver.* 27. conform to that of *Moſes*, Gen. 6. *Every imagination of the thoughts of mans heart,*

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is only evil continually. The word indeed ſignifies the wiſe thoughts, ſo then take the full latitude of it thus: *The carnal mind*, in its beſt and wiſeſt thoughts, is direct *enmity againſt God.*

Carnal, τῆς σαρκὸς] What meant by the fleſh here? It is the whole corrupt Nature of man, and *that* we may know by its oppoſition to the Spirit, not to the Spirit or Soul of a man, for ſo it hath no thoughts nor minding, theſe being proper to the Soul, but oppoſed to the Spirit of God.

Now the Corruption of Nature is called the Fleſh, not without very good reaſon, not only to ſignifie the baſeneſs of it, the Fleſh being the more ignoble and meaner part of a Man, but becauſe the greateſt part of the ſins of mens lives are about ſenſitive objects, and things that concern the Fleſh or the Body; it lets in temptation of ſin to the Soul by the doors of the Senſes, and it gives the laſt perfection, or accompliſhment, to ſin, by external acting of it. The very firſt ſin, that brought in Death and Miſery with it upon Mankind, the pleaſure of the eye and of the taſte, were ſharers in the guiltineſs of it.

The carnal mind] Man in regard of his compoſure, is, as it were, the tie and band of Heaven and Earth; they meet and are married in him. A Body he has taken out of the Duſt, but a Soul breathed from Heaven, the Father of Spirits; a Houſe of Clay, but a Gueſt of moſt noble Extraction. But the

pity is, it hath forgot its Original, and is ſo drowned in fleſh, that it deſerves no other but to go under the Name of Fleſh. It is become the Slave and Drudge of the Body, and, as the *Iſraelites* in *Egypt*, made perpetually to moyl in Clay. What is all your Merchandiſe, your Trades and Manufactures, your Tillage and Husbandry, but all for the Body, in its behalf, for Food and Raiment? In all theſe, the Mind muſt be careful and thoughtful, and yet properly they reach it not, for it ſelf hath no intereſt in them. It is true, the neceſſity of the Body requires much of theſe things, and ſuperfluous cuſtom far more, but it is lamentable that men force their Souls to forget it ſelf, and its proper buſineſs, to attend theſe things only, and be buſie in them They ſpend all their time, and their choiceſt pains upon periſhing things, and which is worſe, engage their affections to them. They *mind earthly things, whoſe end is deſtruction*, Philip. 3. 19. The ſame word that's here, φρονημα της σαρκος, &c.

Will you conſider ſeriouſly, that your Souls run the hazard of periſhing, becauſe you conſider not their Spiritual Nature? When that earthly Tabernacle of yours ſhall fall to the ground (and e're long it muſt) your Souls muſt then enter Eternity, and though you had as large a ſhare of earthly things as your earthly hearts now would wiſh, they all loſe their uſe in that moment; they are not a proper good for the Soul at any time, and leaſt

leaſt at that time. If you keep it all your life long, buſie about the intereſt and benefit of the fleſh, the Body, how poor will be when thy part, having provided nothing at all for it ſelf, but the guiltineſs of a ſinful life, which will ſink it into that bottomleſs Pit? Be forewarned then, *for to be carnally minded is death, verſe 6.* precedeing the Text.

The carnal mind] Now as Sin hath abaſed and degenerated the Soul of Man, making it Carnal, ſo the Son of God, by taking on our Nature, hath ſublimated it again, and made it Spiritual. The Souls that received him are Spiritualized, yea, as Sin made the Soul Carnal, Grace makes the very Body to become Spiritual, making it partaker and coworker in ſpiritual things, together with the Soul, in doing and ſuffering, and participant of the hopes too of an everlaſting reward. This is the main Chriſtian Character our Apoſtle gives here, that they are ſpiritually minded, and that their actions ſuit their minds, *They walk not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit*; whereas before, with the reſt of the World, they were eager in the purſuit of Honours and Profits, and Worldly Pleaſures. Now the ſtream of their deſires run in another channel, they ſeek after Honour, and are very ambitious of it, but it is ſuch Honour as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of in this Epiſtle, *Rom. 2. 7. By patient continuance in well doing they ſeek for glory, and honour, and immortality.* Their mind is upon profit and gain, but

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it is with the ſame Apoſtle, *Philip.* 3. that they *may win Chriſt*, and they account all other things loſs in compariſon. And their deſires are after pleaſure too, but not *Carnal Pleaſures*, thoſe are both baſe, and of ſhort continuance, but the pleaſures they aim at, are thoſe that are *at Gods right hand, and for evermore*, Pſal. 16. 11. And that path of life he there ſpeaks of, that way of holineſs that leads thither, is their delight: Spiritual Excerciſes they go to, not as their task only, but more as their joy and refreſhment. And this change the Spirit of God works in the Soul, making it (yea, and the body wherein it dwells) of Carnal, to become Spiritual, as the fire, to which the Holy Ghoſt is compared, refines Sand and Aſhes, and makes of them the pureſt Glaſs, which is ſo neat and tranſparent.

Enmity againſt God] Sin hath not only made us unlike God, by defacing his beautiful Image in us; not only ſtrangers by making us wander far off from him, but enemies; nor enemies only, but *Enmity* in the abſtract, for that is emphatical, *The carnal mind is Enmity*; nothing elſe but Enmity.

Now this Enmity is deſcribed in the latter clauſe of the Text, by an Antipathy, ſo to call it, or Not-compliance with the Law of God; *it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither can it be*, to wit, while it remains ſuch. There is an abſolute impoſſibility in it, to ſuit with the Law of God, and conſequently, with God himſelf; the reaſon lies in their oppoſite

poſite qualities. *God is ſpiritual and holy, and ſo is the law,* as our Apoſtle hath it in the preceeding Chapter; and the oppoſition he there makes, betwixt his Unregenerate part and the Law, is wholly true of the Unregenerate man. The *law is holy*, ſays he, *ver.* 12. And *ver.* 14. *It is ſpiritual*; to which too he oppoſes, *but I am carnal, ſold under ſin.*

Where are now thoſe that ſo vilifie Grace, and magnifie Nature? Or, ſhall I rather ſay, Nullifie Grace, and Deifie Nature? Here is the beſt Elogy the Apoſtle will beſtow upon the beſt of Natures, *Enmity againſt God.* Nay, all the ſparkles of Virtue and Moral Goodneſs in Civil Men, and Ancient Heathens, is no better; beſides many other things, to be ſaid to the Vertues of thoſe Philoſophers, as ignorance of Chriſt, by whom alone this enmity is removed.

I ſhould eaſily confeſs, nor (I think) can any deny it, but that there is in the very ruines of our Nature, ſome Character left of a tendency to God, as our chief and only ſatisfying good, which we may call a kind of love, and when we hear him ſpoken of, find it flutter and ſtir; and hence men ſo abhor the imputation of hating God, and being enemies. Yet this is ſo ſmothered under ſenſuality and fleſh, that until we be made ſpiritual, nothing appears, but practical, and, as they call it, Interpretative Enmity.

There is one thing ſtains them enough, they were all, as that Father ſpeaks, *Animalia*

lia Gloriæ, They aimed not in their ſtudy of Vertue at God's glory, but at their own; and is not that quarrel enough, and matter of enmity? Says not he, *My glory I will not give unto another*, &c.

But that is moſt uſeful for you, to convince you of that too good conceit men have of their natural condition; you would take it hardly, the moſt prophane of you all, if any ſhould come to you, in particular, and tell you, you are an enemy to God. But I anſwer, there is none of you, if you believe the Scriptures, but will confeſs, that all men are naturally ſuch; and therefore, except we find in our ſelves a notable alteration, from the condition of Nature, we muſt take with it, that we are Enemies, yea, Enmity to God. Of ſtrangers to become acquainted with him; yea, which is more, of enemies to become friends, is a greater and more remarkable change, than to be incident to a man without any evidence and ſign of it. I know there is very great variety in the way and manner of Converſion; and to ſome, eſpecially if it be in their tender years, Grace may be inſtilled, and dropt in, as it were, inſenſibly. But this I may confidently ſay, that whatſoever be the way of working it, there will be a wide and apparent difference betwixt friendſhip with God, and the condition of Nature, which is Enmity againſt him. Do not flatter your ſelves, ſo long as your minds remain Carnal, ardent in love to the World, and cold

cold in love to God: *Lovers of pleaſures more then of God* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks.) You are his Enemies, for with him there is no *neutrality*. That which they ſay, taxing it as a weakneſs in the Sex, *Aut amat aut odit nihil eſt tertium*, is in this caſe neceſſarily true of all. And this is Gods peculiar, that he can judge Infallibly of the inſide; thoſe ſhadows of friendſhip, men uſe one with another, will not paſs with him, deceived he cannot be, but men may eaſily, and alas! too many do deceive themſelves in this matter to their own ruin.

We may learn hence, how deep Sin goes in our Nature, and conſequently, that the cure and remedy of it muſt go as deep. That all the parts of our Bodies, and powers of our Souls, are polluted originally; *our very mind and conſcience*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *for it is immerſed in fleſh, and inſlaved to fleſh naturally*, and therefore goes under its name, *We are become all fleſh.* That is the ſpring of our miſchiefs; we have loſt our likeneſs with our Father, the Father of Spirits, the pureſt and moſt Spiritual Spirit, till renewed by participation of his Spirit on our Fleſh.

And it is the Errour, not only of Natural Men, but ſomewhat of the Godly too, that in Self-reformation, they ſet themſelves againſt actual ſin, but they lay not the Ax to the root of the Tree; this root of bitterneſs, this our inbred and natural enmity againſt God.

God. And till this be done, the lopping off of ſome branches will do no good, while the root is in vigour thoſe will grow again, and poſſibly, faſter than before. Bewail every known act of ſin, as much as you can, for the leaſt of them deſerves it; but withal, let the conſideration of them lead you into thoughts of this ſeed of Rebellion, the wickedneſs of our Nature, that takes life with us in the Womb, and ſprings and grows up with us, and this will humble us exceedingly, and raiſe our Godly ſorrow to a higher tide. We find *David* taketh this courſe, *Pſal.* 51. 5. where he is lamenting his particular ſin of Adultery and Murder, it leads him to the ſinfulneſs of his Nature, *I was ſhapen in Iniquity, and in ſin did my Mother conceive me*, or, warm me; which he mentions not to extenuate and diminiſh his ſin, no, he is there very far from that ſtrain, but adds it as a main aggravation. Indeed, the power of Original Sin, in the Regenerate, is laid very low, yet not altogether extinct, which they find often to their grief, and makes them cry out with our Apoſtle, in the former Chapter, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death.* The Converted are already delivered (as he adds) from the Dominion of it, but not from the Moleſtation and Trouble of it; though it is not a quiet and uncontroulled Maſter, as it was before, yet it is in the Houſe ſtill as an unruly Servant or Slave, ever vexing and annoying

noying them: And this Body of Death, they ſhall have ſtill cauſe to bewail, till Death releaſe them. This Leproſie hath taken ſo deep in the Walls of this Houſe, that it cannot perfectly be cleanſed till it be taken down; and it is this, more than any other ſorrows or afflictions of life, that makes the Godly man not only content to die, but deſirous, longing with our Apoſtle, *To be diſſolved, and be with Chriſt, which is far better.*

As this teaches us the miſery of Mans Nature, ſo it ſets off, and commends exceedingly, the riches of Gods Grace. Are men naturally his Enemies? Why then, admire his patience and bounty a little, and then we will ſpeak of his Saving-Grace. Could not he very eaſily eaſe himſelf of his Adverſaries (as he ſays by the Prophet?) Wants he power in his right hand, to find out, and cut off all his Enemies? Surely no, not only he hath power to deſtroy them all in a moment, but the very withdrawing of his hand, that upholds their being (though they conſider it not) would make them fall to nothing; yet is he pleaſed not only to ſpare Tranſgreſſours, but to give them many outward bleſſings, *rain and fruitful ſeaſons*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Act.* 14. And the Earth that is ſo full of mans Rebellion, is yet more full of his Goodneſs: *The earth is full of thy goodneſs.* It is remarkable, that that ſame reaſon which is given, *Gen.* 6. 5. of the Juſtice of God in drowning the World, is

Chapter

Chapter 8. 21. rendred as the reaſon of Gods reſolved patience ever ſince.

His *Grace*, in finding a way of Reconcilement, and not ſparing his own Son, his only begotten Son, to accompliſh it; nor did he ſpare himſelf. O matchleſs Love! to lay down his life, not for Friends but for Strangers! Not only ſo, but Enemies, for Unrighteous and Ungodly Perſons, ſuch as be at enmity againſt him, *Rom.* 5. 7, 8, *&c.* And having done this, he ſends his Word, the Meſſage of Reconciliation, to Rebels, and ſends his Spirit into the hearts of theſe whom he hath appointed to Salvation, to change their Spirits, that they periſh not in Diſobedience; he brings *them near that were far off*, having ſlain this enmity by the Death of his *Son*.

As many of you then, as have hitherto heard this Meſſage of Reconcilement in vain, be perſwaded at laſt to give ear to it: This is all that Gods Ambaſſadours require, according to their Inſtructions from himſelf, That men would lay down that enmity againſt him, and not be ſo fooliſh as wilfully to periſh in it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20.

Conſider that this enmity is (1) Unjuſt. (2) Unhappy. Unjuſt it is, being againſt him who is the chief object of Love, who is altogether Goodneſs, both in himſelf, and towards his Creatures; it is too much not to love him with moſt ardent and ſuperlative affection, but to entertain enmity againſt him

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is madneſs, as he ſaid to one who asked why are the beautiful loved, *it is a blind man's queſtion.* Certainly we are blind if we ſee not cauſe enough, not only to deſiſt from enmity, but to be inflamed with his love; one glance of his amiable countenance is ſufficient to cauſe the moſt rebellious heart to yield, and lay down arms, and for ever devote themſelves to his ſervice. No, we know him not, and therefore it is we hold out againſt him; is he not the living ſpring of all our comforts? Have we not from him life and breath, and all things? And is he not ready to forgive *Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion and Sin?* Let mercy melt our hearts to him, thoſe ſweet rays of love. Let his loving kindneſs overcome theſe ſtubborn Hearts or Spirits of ours; among Enemies, the weaker uſually ſeeks firſt for Peace, but here the Mighty; Almighty God comes to intreat agreement with ſinful Clay.

But if this prevail not, then think how unhappy this enmity is, you that are ſo afraid of men, and theſe weak men, of men like your ſelves, whoſe breath is in their Noſtrils; will ye not tremble at his power, and be afraid to continue in terms of Hoſtility, againſt him who is the Lord of Hoſts, who hath power of the Soul and Body both, to kill both, and caſt them into Hell? What is the ſtouteſt of men, but as Stubble, to the flame of his Wrath? *Our God is a conſuming fire; the ſinners in Zion are afraid* (ſays the

Prophet, *who ſhall dwell*, ſay they, *with devouring fire and everlaſting burnings.* Then if you would not periſh, when his wrath is kindled, take that word of *Eliphaz*, Job 22. 21. *Acquaint now thy ſelf with him, and be at peace, thereby good ſhall come unto thee.*

And to you, ſo many as he hath taken into friendſhip with himſelf, look backward to the gulf you have eſcaped, and forward to the happineſs you are appointed too, and let the joynt-conſideration of both, awaken your Hearts and Tongues to Praiſes. How can your Hearts contain ſuch a wonder of Love, as he hath manifeſted to you, and not run over in Songs and Praiſe?

And as you owe him praiſes, ſo ſtudy, being made his friends, to become more like him; that ſame *idem velle & idem nolle*, to love and hate the ſame things with him, will be a ſure teſtimony of friendſhip. And becauſe carnality, or fleſhly and earthly mindedneſs, is here made the Character of Enmity, mortifie theſe affections, nail them to that Croſs of Chriſt, whereby the enmity was taken away. And further, being once admitted into friendſhip, labour for a further degree of Intimacy with him, and forbear every thing that may hinder that; uſe frequent converſe with him, for that both entertains and increaſes friendſhip. If any thing fall out on your part (as it too often does)

does) that may occaſion any ſtrangeneſs betwixt you and your God, reſt not till it be removed: and if you walk in this way, it ſhall undoubtedly, at length, bring you where you ſhall abide in his preſence for ever, and ſhall no more fear any breach or interruption of enjoying him. *To him be praiſe.* Amen.

SERMON, X.

Rom. XIII. 5.

Wherefore ye muſt needs be ſubject, not only for Wrath, but alſo for Conſcience ſake.

THE Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, that ſhines in the natural order and dependence of things in the frame of the great World, appears likewiſe, and commends it ſelf to us, in the civil order he hath inſtituted in the Societies of Men, the leſſer World. As out of the ſame Maſs he made the Heaven, and the Earth, and the other Elements betwixt them, one higher than another, and gave them different Stations, and Qualities, yet ſo different as to be linkt and concatenated together, *Concordia Diſcordia*, and all for the concern and benefit of the whole.

Thus for the good of Men, hath the Lord aſſigned theſe different Stations of Rule and Subjection, though all of one Race *Acts* 17. Raiſing from among Men ſome above the reſt, and Cloathed them with ſuch Authority, as hath ſome repreſentment of himſelf, and accordingly communicating to them his own Name, *I have ſaid you are Gods.* And the very power that is in Magiſtracy to curb and puniſh

puniſh theſe that deſpiſe it, the Apoſtle uſeth as a ſtrong and hard Cord to bind on the duty of Obedience, a Cord of *Neceſſity*, but he adds another of a higher Neceſſity, that binds more ſtrongly and yet more ſweetly, that of *Conſcience*, wherefore ye muſt needs be ſubject *not only for wrath, but alſo for Conſcience ſake.*

Obſerve: 1. This is the main conſideration that cloſes the diſcourſe, the great Cord, that binds on and faſtens all the reſt, all the arguments foregoing, therefore, are mainly here to be preſt. Have a reverent and conſcientious reſpect to the Ordinance of God in the Inſtitution of Government, and to the Providence of God in his choice of thoſe particular perſons whom he calls to it. Contain thy ſelf in thy own Station, and ſubmit to thoſe ſet higher by the Lord, in obedience to him. This indeed is the only true Spring of all obedience, both to God and to Men *for him*, and *according to his Ordinance*, to regulate the outwatd carriage, without the living principle of an enlightned and ſanctified conſcience within, is to build without a Foundation. This is the thing God eyes moſt, he looks through the ſurface of Mens Actions to the bottom, follows them into their ſource, examines from what perſwaſives and reaſons they flow; he ſees not only the handle of the Dial, but all the Wheels and Weights of the Clock that are the cauſe of its motion, and accordingly judges both Men and their Acti-

ons to be good or evil as the inward frame and ſecret motions of the heart are in his own Worſhip; the outſide of it may have the ſame viſage and plauſable appearance in a multitude conven'd to it, and concurring in it, and no humane eye can trace a difference, and yet, oh, what vaſt difference doth Gods eye diſcover amongſt them, he ſees the multitude of theſe that are driven to his Houſe, by the power of Civil and Church Laws, or carried to it only with the ſtream of Company and Cuſtom, and thoſe I fancy take up the moſt room in our Churches. But he ſees here and there, where ſuch are in any corner that Worſhip him in ſingleneſs of heart, out of conſcience to his holy Command, and of their many obligations that dare not let paſs any opportunity they can reach of doing ſervice to their Lord, and that dare not ſlight his Word. And thus coming for conſcience ſake, they do preſent their Souls to receive his Word, give their hearts up to receive the impreſſion of it, put themſelves under it, to be ſtampt by it according to that *Rom.* 6. 17. *But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of Doctrine which was delivered you.* So likewiſe he ſees thoſe that bear his Name to his people, the Miniſters of his Word; If they Preach conſtantly and live blameleſsly, and are diligent and irreprovable in all the external parts of their walking: This laſt ſatisfies Mens queſtions in their inſpection and viſitings, but Gods enquiry and viſiting ſearches deeper,

he

he asks from what heart all this comes, if from a holy conſcience of the weight and high importance of their holy calling, and a faithful reſpect to the intereſt of their Maſters Glory and his Peoples Souls. And thus, he, as Supream Judge, ſits and conſiders the proceedings of Judges and Magiſtrates, not only whether they do that which is Juſt, for often they cannot, eaſily or ſafely, do otherwiſe, but whether they do it with regard to him or not; that is, whether they Judge righteouſly, for conſcience ſake, or not; whether they do conſider him, as ſitting above them, when they ſit down upon the Bench or Seat of Juſtice, and *do indeed*, truly *ſpeak righteouſneſs*, Pſal. 58. Or if in heart they work wickedneſs, if they have any corrupt end, or hearts that are not ſtraight, he ſits on their heart and Judges it: Or if this be done either for *baſe gain*, or *vain-glory*, or by *compulſion*, or outward neceſſity, or danger of cenſure; or if it be this latter, and inward neceſſity of Conſcience, which makes a true willingneſs.

Thus people, if they obey for Wrath, which is, for fear of the Magiſtrates Sword, more than for Conſcience of the Lords command, God accounts not this Obedience, but in his Judgement it goes for no better than Rebellion. It is to be feared, too many Magiſtrates, and others, have in this Natien embrac'd the Reformation, not at all for Conſcience ſake, but only for Wrath,

fear of Laws and Authority. But although we are not able to follow forth this ſearch to the full, that being the Lords own Prerogative, yet, truly, where it is evident to us, that there is nothing of Conſcience, though in ciuil things, it may paſs, yet in things that are peculiarly matters of Conſcience in Religion, men ought to be ſomewhat wary, according to the utmoſt of due diſcerning, and are poſſibly ſomewhat to blame in promiſcuous admitting of ſuch, whoſe Carriage, yea, whoſe Profeſſion and Religion, ſpeaks aloud, that their compliance was wholly conſtrained Obedience, only for Wrath, and not for Conſcience.

If Civil Authority is to be obeyed moſt for Conſcience, than Church Authority, that is more Symbolical with Conſcience, and hath nearer reference to it, ought to aim moſt at that. *Conviction* and *Converſion* is our Work, and not *Conſtraint*, to bring people both by the Word, and by a way of Diſcipline, ſuiting and backing it, to a ſenſe of Sin, and Spiritual thoughts of God, and his Holy Law, that they may be ſubject more for Conſcience than for Wrath.

And ye People, labour more to find the actings of that holy fear of God, and conſcience of his Will, in all your ways; ſtudy to have an inward Light, a practical ſanctifying Light, directing you, and be not meerly held in as Beaſts, by the Authority and Laws of men, but learn to know, and be ſenſible

ſenſible of the Soveraign Authority of the moſt high God and his Law, and to have reſpect unto all his Commandments. If this were once done, how regular a motion would it keep amongſt all Superiours and Inferiours of all ſorts, in Families and States, the one commanding, the other obeying in God? It would be as ſweet Muſick in the Celeſtial Quire of their Lives and Affairs; right informing, and right moving Conſciences, would be as continual Teachers within, directing all in Obedience, and would make it both more conſtant, ſweet and pleaſant, as natural motion; whereas it it grievous and violent, that is from wrath or outward power, and therefore laſts not, as the *Iſraelites* worſhipt God aright while their good Judges lived, and run after Idols when they were removed.

Again: This ſame obedience for *conſcience*, ennobles and ſublimates mens action, even in Civil things, makes them have ſomewhat Divine, turns all into Sacrifice to God; when all is done for God, even Servants and Children obeying Maſters and Parents, Subjects, Magiſtrates, for his commands ſake: And ſtill thinking, in the whole courſe of their regular due Carriage, in their very Callings, This I do for God, my ordinary Labour and Works, and my juſt Obedience to Men, I offer up to him. This is the Philoſophers Stone, that turns actions of lower Metal into Gold, *I ſet the Lord always before me*, Pſ. 16.

Obſ. 2. Kings, and other Powers of the World, who are the Enemies, and ſometimes the enraged Perſecutors of our Holy Religion, miſtake their quarrel, and are very wrongfully miſprejudiced againſt it, and upon that falſe ſuppoſition, do hate and oppoſe it, ſuſpecting it as an Enemy to their Dignity and Authority, whereas there is nothing that doth ſo much aſſert their Juſt power as Religion doth. Civil Laws may tie the *hands* and *tongue* to their obedience, but Religion binds all due ſubjection to them upon the very *Conſciences* of their people, therefore they are both ingrate and unwiſe, in uſing their power againſt Religion, which it ſo much ſtrengthens: Their power ſhould ſtrengthen it, both by way of due return, to correſpond with it in that, and even for its own Intereſt, receiving a new Eſtabliſhment to it ſelf by Eſtabliſhing Religion. Even that Maſter of Irreligious Policy, confeſſes that the profeſſion of Religion is a friend to Authority, but if the ſhadow of it do any thing that way, we ſee, contrary to his prophane ſupicion, the ſubſtance and truth of it doth it much more.

Matchiavel.

Obſ. 3. If for Conſcience ſake, ſubjection; then ſure in nothing againſt the true Rule of Conſcience, and prime Object of Conſcience, the Authority and Law of God. That is the firſt and higheſt, and the perpetual unalterable engagement to him, *binding Kings and Subjects high and low*, and if they leave their

their Station, we ought to keep ours ſtill in a ſtreight ſubjection to God; for the extent of Friendſhip, and all other Relations, and of all Subjection and Obedience, is to be ruled and bounded, *uſque ad aras. Give to* Cæſar *the things that are* Cæſars, *but* nothing of Gods; neither ours to give, nor his to receive.

For, for this Cauſe you pay tribute alſo. This the Apoſtle gives as a ſign of that confeſt right that Magiſtrates have to the ſubjection and obedience of people, that in all Nations this Homage, and Acknowledgment is due to them, *Tribute payed*; which it may be, he the rather mentions becauſe ſome queſtion might be, what might Chriſtians do concerning this; however this according to the Conſtitution of ſeveral places, he takes as granted, to be not only lawful, but due to be rendred. Here we are not to inſiſt on the ſcanning of this, but certainly as the power of a Magiſtrate is not in this, nor in any other thing, abſolute and unbounded, ſo the legal and juſt paying of Tribute and other Revenues by the people, argues their engagement to theſe ſet over them, and is not as Wages to a Mercenary ſervant, but an *Honorary* due to their place and calling, who are the *Miniſters of God in civil Government*; ſo alſo convenient, yet liberal maintenance to the Miniſters of Gods own houſe is their right, yet (not to inrich them) nor yet ought it to be given grudgingly, as undue; or ſuperciliouſly as to ſervants; but with the chearfulneſs

chearfulneſs and reſpect agreeable to the Lords ſervants, watching for their Souls.

All Tribute and Obedience ſtill relates to this, and is grounded on it, the Lords Inſtitution of Power and Government for the good of Men; though it ſometimes prove otherwiſe in the exerciſe of it, yet the Ordinance is pure, and moſt wiſely ſuited to its end, from which the Sin and Corruption of Men turns it, but too often; ſo that *one Man* Rules over another to his hurt, to the hurt of both the Ruler himſelf, and of the Ruled, *Eccl.* 8. 9. *There is a time wherein one Man ruleth over another to his own hurt*, each proving a ſcourge to the other, in the Juſt Judgment of God upon both for their Iniquities, making a fire from *Abimelech* to devour the Men of *Shechem*, and the Men of *Shechem* deal treacherouſly with *Abimelech*.

* *Judg.* 9. 20.

Yet ſtill the thing it ſelf remains good, many skilful Phyſicians may kill inſtead of curing, yet it is but a caprice to decry all Remedies, and the uſe of things Medicinal, that the God of Nature hath furniſht for that uſe: Men may, and alas! moſt do, prejudice their own health, by either intemperate, or ſome way irregular Diet, yet this makes nothing againſt the continual neceſſity and uſe of Food, nor can diſſwade any from uſing it. Thus the abuſes of Authority infringe not this, That Magiſtrates are a publick good, yea, the Unjuſt better than none, Tyranny better than Anarchy; there is ſome Juſtice

Juſtice done in the moſt Unjuſt Government.

But thus they that are exalted to Rule, ought to conſider, who raiſed them, and for what they are raiſed, and ſo faithfully to do Juſtice. They are raiſed high, as the Stars are ſet in their Orbs, for influence and the good of the Inferiour World, and as the Mountains which riſe above the Vallies, not to be places of Prey and Ruin, but by the ſtreams they ſend out to refreſh them. So from Magiſtrates, *Judgment ought to run down as Water, and Juſtice as a mighty Stream*; they ought to conſider themſelves as Miniſters (though called Magiſtrates with relation to the people) yet Miniſters in relation to God, λειτέργοι θεῦ and the people's in him, as the word λειτέργοι imports, being conſtant Labourers for their good: Even the *Sun*, a *Miniſter*, Gods Miniſter of Heat and Light to the Earth. Would they look up thus to God, it would make them look down on their Inferiours, not with the ill aſpect of Pride and Gruelty, but the benign looks of Good Will, Fidelity and Vigilancy, for their Welfare, knowing that they are appointed for this very uſe in the World, not referring to that which is neareſt here, and neareſt themſelves, *The receiving of Tribute*, but the remoteſt good, which is the chief for which their Tribute and themſelves are appointed, The puniſhing of the Wicked, and encouragement of the Good.

Render

Render therefore to all their dues, Tribute to whom Tribute, &c. The Apoſtle enlarges his Exhortation to the general Rule of Equity; the humble upright mind will willingly ſuit with this, and pay reſpect to men, in obedience to God, and therefore primarily to him which the moſt neglect. Honour and fear are due to him as to our Father and Maſter, and yet where is it to be found? *If I be a Father where is mine honour? And if I be a Maſter where is my fear?* &c.. *Mal.* 1. The Tribute of Praiſe and Glory in all theſe is due, and ought not to be purloyned, nor any part detained, but how few are faithful in this? Much *Uncuſtom'd Goods* paſs among our hands in the courſe of our Lives, many things wherein we are not mindful to give Glory, entire Glory to God; but he cannot be deceived, if we go on he will take us in our quieteſt conveyance, and all will be forfeited. We ſhall certainly loſe all, if all Glory return not to him; all that we have, and are, ſhould we daily and heartily offer up to him, from whom we have life and breath, and all things.

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another, &c. That which the Apoſtle ſet before himſelf, as his own ſtudy and exerciſe, *Act.* 24. he doth in the latter part of this Epiſtle ſet forth at large, as the Duty of every Chriſtian, to *keep a Conſcience void of offence towards God and Men.* And having in the former part of it, treated amply and excellently of the Doctrine of

of Chriſtians Faith and Salvation, and aſcended to its higheſt cauſe, he deſcends from thence to give the Rules of a Chriſtian Life; and he reduces them to thoſe two, *To give the Lord his due*, which is, our ſelves entire; *Our Bodies ought to be a living Sacrifice*, Chap. 12. *ver.* 1. And *that* they are not without the Soul; and it is Love in the Soul that offers up this whole burnt-offering to God, the fire that makes it aſcend. Towards men likewiſe, Love is all, of which in many ſeveral acts of it, he ſpake likewiſe in the former Chapter, *verſe* 9. &c. And having inſerted an exhortation to Subjection to Humane Authority, as a Divine Inſtitution, he now returns to that main Comprehenſive and Univerſal Duty of Love, and paſſes fitly from the mention of other particular Dues to Superiours, to this, as the general Due, or ſtanding Debt, all men owe one to another. So, I conceive, this is not intended for the further preſſing of that particular Duty of Subjection, by reducing it (ſeeming hard in it ſelf) to the ſweet and pleaſant Rule, or Law of Love, but that he paſſes wholly from that particular to this common Duty, ſo as that is not excluded but comprehended here with the reſt, though not ſpecially aimed at; but a little Rivulet running a while in its own Channel, in the foregoing Diſcourſe, falls here in again, to the main Current of the Doctrine of Love, begun in the former Chapter. And here he chooſes, adapting it to the

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ſtrain of the Diſcourſes immediately foregoing it, to expreſs this under the Notion of a Debt, *Owe nothing but Love.*

1. Other Debt removed: *Owe nothing* That is, be not willing to continue Debters of an thing to any, by undue retaining of ſuch things, which being paid are not owing. (2) This is a conſtant Debt, that you muſt ſtill pay, and yet ſtill owe, *Love*; and the reaſon added is moſt enforcing, that we be willing, and continue both Prayers, and yet Debters of it; the dueneſs of it appears in this, That the Law requires it; and the compleatneſs of it, That it is all the Law requires. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, which is amplified in the two ſubſequent verſes.

This is moſt fully true, take Love fully as it looks on its full Object, *God* and *Man*; and ſo it is the fulfilling of the whole Law that relates to thoſe two in its Two Tables. Take it particularly as acting towards men (as here it its) and ſo it fulfills that part of the Law, that whole Table that reſpects Man; the moſt of thoſe Commandments are expreſsly here ſet down, and the omiſſion of one is fully ſupplied by that additament, if there be any other. Then again, it is cleared by the common aim and reſult of them all, to keep our Neighbour undamaged, and *that*, Love doth moſt ſurely and fully, therefore fulfills all. That negative *work no ill*, anſwers the ſtrain of all the Commandments, which is to defend our Neighbours from

from our ill, being moſt of them ſuch, and all of them ſuch that are here ſpecifi'd, yet both they, and this ſum of them, involving the contrary, working of all poſſible good to our Neighbour, in which ſtill Love ſuits it, nothing being both more averſe from wrong, and more active in good, than Love, as the ſame Apoſtle hath it, 1 *Cor.* 13. Beſides that, it cannot do, no, not ſo much as think evil, it is naturally carried to bounty and kindneſs, and cannot ceaſe from doing good; a Plant that is fruitful all the Year long.

The Apoſtle hath very good Authority for this abridgment of the Law; our Saviour himſelf, *Matth.* 22. 40. and he takes it out of the Books of the Law themſelves, and certifies *us*, that it is the ſubſtance and ſum both of Law and Prophets. Were this Love abſolutely perfect, the fulfilling of the Law would be ſo too; and where it is ſincere, as the Apoſtle requires it, there is a Sincere and Evangelical Obedience, or fulfilling of the Law.

In the Text conſider, (1) The largeneſs of its Object. (2) The largeneſs of its Acting. (3) The height of *its* true Original.

Firſt: So far as thou canſt acquit thy ſelf, owe nothing elſe to any but Love, owe that to all; not alike familiar Converſe neceſſarily to all, nor alike meaſure of beneficence, nor alike degree of love, but yet

love alike ſincere and real to all; not either a falſe, or an empty fair Carriage, but holy Chriſtian Love, Love rooted in thy heart, and ſpringing up in thy actions, even towards all men, as thy opportunity and ability ſerves thee, and their condition requires of thee, not hating nor deſpiſing any for their poverty in Eſtate, or deformity of Body, or defects of Mind, nor for that which works moſt on men, Injuries done to thy ſelf; all they can do cannot give thee an acquittance, or free thee of this Debt of Love, for thou art bound to another. This is the Rule of Jeſus Chriſt, and the Badg of Chriſtians, to love their very Enemies; but this, oh! how rare? How few attain it? Yea, how few endeavour it? On the contrary, it is by many given over as a deſperate impoſſible buſineſs, they judging of it not according to that Spirit of Chriſt that is his, but according to the Corrupt rancour and bitterneſs of their own natural perverſe Spirits, yea, and too many diſdain it as a poorneſs and ſheepiſhneſs of Spirit to ſuffer and forgive; be it ſo, yet ſuch a Sheepiſhneſs as makes a man like Jeſus Chriſt, who as a Sheep before the Shearers is Dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth, when his heart within was compaſſionate towards them, as appeared, when he opened it concerning them, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* This is true greatneſs of Spirit to partake of His, that is the higheſt and beſt of Spirits, and is the Spirit of Meekneſs

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and Love. How much is this above the common Spirit of the World? Truly, baſe and poor, is that which is diſcompoſed and put out of frame with every touch, whereas this is mighty, and triumphs indeed over all provocations and injuries.

2. Let us conſider the largeneſs of its acting; it goes through the Law, fulfils it all. That command that is firſt in the ſecond Table, that is not here expreſt, is it not Love that makes all concerned in it, to fulfil it? That produceth Mildneſs and Moderation in Superiours, and Faithfulneſs and willing Obedience in Inferiours; makes both Authority and Subjection ſweet and eaſie, where Love commands and Love obeys. And for the next, *Thou ſhalt not kill.* Doth not Love, as the Sun beams, put out the fire by its Divine heat, eat out the Earthy, yea, the Infernal fire of fixed Malice or raſh Anger, that burns naturally in the hearts of men? (Such anger is called *Brutiſh*, *Ezek.* 21. 31. *Burning or Brutiſh:* And on the contrary, *Prov.* 17. 27. The ambiguity is happy, *of an excellent or of a cool Spirit*, for the *cool Spirit* is ſo; cool from baſe paſſion, but burning truly with this Love,) and then is by very ſmall, and many times meerly imaginary cauſes, ſo eaſily blown up, and that flames forth into groſs Murders, or at leaſt ſuch Injuries and Violences, or Contentions and Revilings, as go in Gods account, and are writ down in his Book for Murders. And he doth not miſ-

judge, nor misname things, but they are really what he accounts them. Love can generously pass over these things, about which Folly and Pride make such a noise. Oh! can I bear this and that? and thou wouldest, by so saying, speak thy stout heartedness. Fool, is this stoutness and strength? Is it not rather the greatest weakness to be able to bear nothing? Have not the weakest persons much of that kind of stoutness and strength, who are the soonest moved and disquieted, Women and Children, and Sick or Aged Persons? But *Love*, Christian Love to thy Brother, makes the mind truly strong and composed, not easily stir'd against him for every trifle; nay, nor for greater matters: Love can endure much, yea, *all things*, says the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 13. hath strength to stand under them, and stand firm, whereas base minds, void of Love, break all to pieces under a very small weight; bears all as the supporters of a strong and firm Building, or rather, as a House, covers all, for so it signifies; doth not blaze abroad the failings of men, yea, it hides much, covers a multitude of sins, not only from the eyes of others, but even from a mans own eyes, makes him not behold and look on those things that might provoke him; yea, it is Ingenious and Inventive of the fairest Constructions of things, to take them by the best side, in the favourablest sense, and so long as there is any agree-

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able way to Interpret any thing favourably, will not have a hard thought of it. Thinks no ill, as there it is: not only hath not active evil thoughts of Revenge, or returning Evil, but willingly doth not judge ill of what is done by others, and that might be ſo lookt on as to provoke, ϗ λογιζεται, doth not reckon wrongs ſo high as want of Charity moves the moſt to do, ſets them low, and as a healthful Conſtitution is ſweet it ſelf, and reliſhes all things right, there is more true pleaſure, and content of mind, in forgiving, than ever any man found in revenge; that is but a Feveriſh delight that Malice and Anger hath wrought, working perhaps greedily, but is indeed a Diſtemper. This Love is the very root of Peace and Concord, a humble Grace, that is not lifted up and Inſolent, as the word there is, and ſo doth not breed Jars about Punctilioes; eſteems ſo well of others, and ſo meanly of it ſelf, that it cannot well be croſt by any, in that matter of under valuing. But vain Spirits are puft up with a little approbation, and as eaſily kindled up with any affront, or apprehended diſgrace. Love is not lightly put out of temper, as ſickly Conſtitutions, a Fit of a Fever or Ague, with any blaſt or wrong touch of Diet, it is of a ſtronger digeſtion, and firmer health.

Then for that *Not commit Adultery*. All things of that kind, though they ſpring from a kind of Love, yet not from this Love *from above*, but (as the Apoſtle *James* diſtinguiſhes

wiſdom) from the Love that is *ſenſual* and *deviliſh*; Love is not the true name of it, but baſe and brutiſh Luſt, and generally all prophane Societies, and ſortings of men one with another, are moſt contrary to this pure Love. The Drunkards that are Cup-friends, as they are full of Jars, and have no conſtancy, but are unſtable as that wherein their Friendſhip lies, their Liquor, are a vile deſpicable Society, not worthy of Men, much leſs of Chriſtians. This ſin hath affininity with Uncleanneſs, and is uſually ranked there. Right Love to a Tipler, is not to ſit down and guzzle with him, but to reprove and labour to reclaim him, and where that cannot be done, to avoid him. To wicked perſons we owe not a complacency or delight, which is moſt contrary to this Love, but hating their Sin we owe them Love, and the deſiring and (as far as Love can) the procuring their Converſion and Salvation. Wicked Converſe cannot conſiſt with this Love, which is the fulfilling of the Law, and a Combination for the breaking of it, and the joining their ſtrength together for that end. Love rejoiceth not in Iniquity, but in the Truth, makes not men rejoice together in Sin. So foul unclean Affections, and a Society, in order to the gratifying them, is moſt contrary to it; true Love is moſt tender of the Chaſtity of others, and cannot abide an impure thought in it ſelf.

So in not Stealing. Love would be loth to enrich,

enrich, or advantage it ſelf, upon the damage of others in any kind, it doth moſt faithfully nd ſingly ſeek the profit, and proſperity of our Neighbour, even as our own. And if this took place, of how much uſe were it in the World? But oh! it is rare. This *meum* and *tuum* is the grand Cauſe of the ill underſtanding and diſcords that are amongſt men, when it is not managed by this Love but by Self-love.

And the tendering and preſerving of the good name of our Brethren, is a proper and very remarkable fruit of this Love, which is ſo far from forging falſe defaming Stories, that it will rather excuſe if it may be done, or if not, will pity the real failings of men that tend to their reproach; and on the contrary, will teach men to rejoice in the good carriage and good eſteem of their Brethren as of their own.

In the end, Love works ſuch a Complacency in the good of others, and ſuch a Contentation with our own Eſtate, that it moſt powerfully baniſhes that unruly humour of Coveting, which looks on the condition of others with envy, and on our own with grudging and diſcontent.

This Law of Love written within, doth not only rectifie and order the Hands and Tongue, but the Jealouſies, the very ſtirrings of the Heart; it corrects the uſual diſorder of its motion, and bars thoſe uncharitable inordinate thoughts that do ſo abound and ſwarm in Carnal minds.

3. The *Original* of this Love is that other Love which corresponds to the other part, the first and chief point of the Law; our Duty towards God. Love to him is the sum and source of all Obedience, when the whole Soul and Mind is possest with that, then all is acceptable and sweet that he commands; first, what he commands, as immediately referrable to himself, and then what is the Rule of our Carriage to men, as being prescrib'd and commanded by him. For so, and no otherwise, is this Love the fulfilling of the Law, when it flows from that first Love, Love to God, whose Law it is, that commands this other Love to Men. Some may have somewhat like it, by a mildness and ingenuity of Nature, being inoffensive and well-willing towards all; but then only doth it fulfil the Law, when out of regard to the Law of God it obeys, and obeys out of love to him whose Law it is. So then, the Love of God in the heart is the Spring of right and holy Love to our Neighbour, both (1) because in obedience to him, whom we love soveraignly, we will love even sincerely, because he will have it so. That is reason enough to the Soul possest, and taken up with his Love. It loves nothing, how lovely soever, but in him and for him, in order and subordination to his Love, and in respect to his Will; and it loves any thing, how unlovely soever, taking it in that Contemplation. It loves not the dearest Friend but

but in God, and can love the hatefulleſt Enemy for him. *Amicum in Deo & inimicum propter Deum*, Aug. His love can beautifie the moſt unamiable Object and make it lovely. He ſaith of a worthleſs undeſerving Man, or thy moſt undeſerving Enemy, *Love him for my ſake, becauſe it pleaſes me*; that's reaſon enough to one that loves him. (2) There is that dilateing ſweetning Vertue in love to God, that it can act no other way to men but as becomes Love. Baſe ſelf-love contracts the heart, and is the very root of all Sin, the chief wickedneſs in our corrupt Nature; but the Love of God aſſimilates the Soul to him, makes it Divine, and therefore Bountiful; full of Love to all. (So theſe two contradict not, *Love the Lord with all thy heart, and thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.* If all our love muſt go to God, what remains for our Neighbour? Indeed all go upwards, and be all placed on him, and from thence it is refounded and regulated downwards to men, according to his Will.)

But Self-love brings forth Pride, and Cruelty, and Covetouſneſs, and Uncleanneſs, and diſdain of others, and all ſuch kind of Monſters; ſo it is the main breaking of the Law.

All that can be ſaid, will not perſwade men to this, till the Lord by his Love teach it and impreſs it on the heart. Know that this is the Badge of Chriſts Followers,

Followers, and his great Rule and Law given to them; and if you will follow him, that you may come to be where he is, then ſtudy this, That as our Lord Chriſt loved us, ſo alſo we ought to love one another.

SERMON, XI.

SERMON, XI.

PREFACE.

GReat and various are the Evils that lodg within the Heart of Man: Hence proceed *Evil thoughts, Adulteries, Murders,* and many other miſchiefs, as our Saviour ſpecifies there; they come forth apace, and yet the heart is not emptied of them. But was this heart thus at firſt, when it came newly forth of the hands of its Maker? Surely, no: *Man was made upright, but he found out many Inventions.* Soon did the heart find the way to corrupt it ſelf, but to renew it ſelf, is as impoſſible as to have been the Author of its own Creation; eaſily could it deface the precious Characters of Gods Image, but it paſſes the Art of Men and Angels to reſtore them: Only the Son of God, who for that purpoſe took on him our Nature, can make us, according to the Apoſtles Phraſe, *partakers of the Divine Nature.* It is he alone that can baniſh theſe Unclean Spirits, and keep poſſeſſion that they return no more. Have not they made a happy change of Gueſts, that have thoſe Infernal Troops turn'd out of Doors, and the King of Glory fixing his abode within them?

This

Pſal.24.7. This is the voice of the Goſpel, *Lift up your heads, ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlaſting doors, that the King of glory may enter in.* But ſmall is the number of thoſe that open where this voice is daily ſounded; yea, ſome there are that grow worſe under the frequent Preaching of the Word, as if Sin were emulous, and as is ſaid of Vertue, would grow by oppoſition. The truth is, too many of us turn theſe ſerious Exerciſes of Religion into an idle Divertiſement. Take heed that Formality, and Cuſtom, and Novelty, do not often help to fill up many Rooms in our Church. It were indeed a breach of Charity, to entertain the fullneſs of your Aſſemblies with ill Conſtruction. No, it is to be commended, But would to God we were more careful to ſhew our Religion in our Lives, to ſtudy to know better the Deceits and Impoſtures of our own hearts, and to gain daily more Victory over our ſecret and beſt beloved Sins. Let our intentions then be to meet with Chriſt here, and to admit him gladly to dwell and rule within us; if he conquer our inward Enemies, thoſe without ſhall not be able to hurt us: if he deliver us from our ſinful Luſts, he will ſtill our own diſtruſtful fears. And that ſuch may be the fruits of our meeting, let us turn our ſelves towards the Throne of Grace, with humble Prayer, in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous.

Pſal.

Pſalm LXVI. 10.

Surely the wrath of a man ſhall praiſe thee: The remainder of wrath ſhalt thou reſtrain.

WHat *Man is this* (ſaid the Paſſengers in the Ship) *that even the Winds and the Sea obey him?* Chriſt ſuddenly turns a great tempeſt into a greater Calm, *Matth.* 8. 27. Surely thoſe are no ordinary words of Command, that ſwelling Waves and boiſterous Winds, in the midſt of their rage, are forc'd to hear, and taught to underſtand and obey them. Therefore the holding of the Seas in the hollow of his Hand, the bridling of the Wind, and riding upon the Wings of it, we find peculiarly attributed to the Almighty. But no leſs, if not more wonderful is another of his Prerogatives, to wit, His Soveraignty over all Mankind, the divers and ſtrange motions of the Heart of Man; admirable is it to govern thoſe, both in reſpect of their Multitude and Irregularity. Conſider we what Millions of men dwell at once upon the face of the Earth; and again, what Troops of ſeveral Imaginations will paſs through the fancy of any one man, within the compaſs of one day; 'Tis much to keep eye upon them, and to behold them all at once, but far more to Command

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and Controul them all; yet if they were all Loyal and willingly Obedient, were they Tractable and easily Curbed, it were more easie for us to conceive how they might be Governed, but to bound and over-rule the unruly hearts of men, the most of them continually are either plotting or acting Rebellion against their Lord, to make them all concur and meet at last in one end, cannot be done but by a Power and a Wisdom that are both Infinite. That God (whose Name we often mention, but seldom think on his Excellency) is alone the Absolute Monarch of mens Hearts, and the Ruler of all their Motions; he hath them Limited while they seem most free, and works his own Glory out of their attempts, while they strive most to dishonour him. *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee*, &c.

The Psalm is made up of these two different sorts of Thoughts, the one arising out of *Particular Experience*, and the other out of a *General Doctrine*. These drawn from Experience, are set down in the verses precedeing the Text, and in it, with those that follow, is the *Doctrine*, with a Duty annexed to it; which two are Faiths main Supporters: by past particulars verifie the Doctrine, and the generality of the Doctrine serves to explain the particular Experiences to all wise observers. There is not a Treasure of the Merits of Saints in the Church (as some Dream) but there is a Treasure of the precious Experiences

periences of the Saints, which every Believer hath right to make uſe of; and theſe we ſhould be verſt in, that we may have them in readineſs at hand, in time of need, and know how to uſe them, both to draw comfort from them to our ſelves, and arguments to uſe with God.

The words contain clearly Two Propoſitions, both of them concerning the *wrath of Man*; the former hath the event of it, *Surely the wrath of Man ſhall praiſe thee.* The latter, the limitation of it, *The remainder of wrath thou wilt reſtrain.*

That the Vertues and Graces of men do praiſe the Lord, all men eaſily underſtand, for they flow from him, his Image and Superſcription is upon them, and therefore no wonder, if of them, he has from them a Tribute of Glory: Who knows not that Faith praiſes him? *Abraham believed and gave glory to God*; good Works, the fruits of Faith, praiſe him too, *Herein is your heavenly Father glorified* (ſays our Saviour) *that you bring forth much fruit.* But that the Inordinate wrath of man ſhould praiſe him, may ſeem ſomewhat ſtrange; were it Gods own wrath (as wrath is attributed to him in Scripture) that might praiſe him, for it is always moſt Juſt. Or were it a due and moderate anger of Man, upon Juſt cauſe, that were fit for praiſing him too, in deſpite of the Stoicks; but that *wicked* and *diſordered wrath* (which is undoubtedly here meant) that the wrath of men,

that

that is both uncomely and diſhonourable for themſelves (though they think otherwiſe) that even ſuch a wrath ſhould honour God, and praiſe him, argues well that he hath good right to Praiſes, when every thing, even things that ſeem contrary to his Nature, as well as to his Law, do pay them to him. And that he hath great power and wiſdom who obtains what is due to him, even from thoſe perſons and things, that of themſelves are moſt unwilling and unfit to pay it. This is the excellent skill of his wiſdom, to draw that which ſhall go into the making up of the precious Compoſition of his Praiſe out of this Poiſon, for ſo the word here uſed for wrathful heat, doth ſometimes ſignifie; and this wrath often proves ſo, a deadly Poiſon both to thoſe it is incens'd againſt, and to the very Breaſt that breeds it, and wherein it is kindled.

But for the clearer underſtanding of this, I conceive it will be requiſite to conſider more diſtinctly: (1) What this wrath of man is: (2) How it can praiſe God. And laſtly, the Infallibility of this event: *Surely the wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee.*

In the 148 *Pſalm*, where *David* Summons the Creatures to meet in that Song of Praiſe, to keep that full Conſort, he calls not only the Heavens, and the Inhabitants of it, Angels and Lights, but theſe of the lower World to bear their part in it; and not only Men, Beaſts, Cattel, creeping things, and

and the flying of Fowl, but theſe Creatures that do moſt reſemble this wrath here ſpoken of, Fire, Stormy Tempeſt, and Dragons, *&c.* The tenor of the *Pſalm* doth ſhew, that by the *wrath of man* is to be underſtood the undue rage of Evil and Ungodly men againſt thoſe whom God owns for his People. The word here uſed, ſignifies a *hot* or *inflaming* wrath; and indeed, ſuch is the feveriſh diſtempered Anger of the Churches Enemies. And as too much heat is an Enemy to ſolid Reaſon, this hot wrath of theirs makes them incapable of wiſe deliberation in themſelves, and inflexible to the good advice of others. 'Tis true, they take Counſel how to execute their wrath, as we ſhall hear anon, but they take no Counſel that may cool it. Anger deſcribed by its Material Cauſe, is called a boiling of Blood the about the Heart; but this ariſeth from the apprehenſion of ſomething offenſive, kindling a deſire of revenge. Now it is a wonder what the Powers of the World find in Chriſt, and his harmleſs Flock, that can incenſe them; St. *James* ſays of the Tongue, *that it is ſet on fire of Hell.* The ſame is the Original of this wrath, *Why doth the Heathen rage*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*? That is only, to what purpoſe? Intimating that it is a fruitleſs rage, and void of ſucceſs, in regard of Gods power. But why? That's upon what occaſion? Checking the rage as groundleſs, and without cauſe, in regard of Chriſt and his Churches Innocency. The cauſe is only

within themſelves, to wit, That unhappy Antipathy of the Serpents Seed againſt the Seed of the Woman. Thus this wrath of man is the cauſeleſs malicious Enmity of the Wicked againſt the Church of God, and under the name of this Paſſion, I take to be here compriſed likewiſe all the Attendants of it, all their crafty Complotments and Devices for the acting of their wrath. As there is mention of the Nations rage againſt Chriſt, in the ſecond *Pſalm*, ſo likewiſe of the Conſultations of thoſe that are of Quality fit for it, *The Rulers take counſel together.* Further, this wrath is not barely their inward fire, but the vent of it flames into cruel and outragious Practices, including likewiſe all the Inſtruments they make uſe of. And of all theſe its true, that God ſhall gain Glory by them, Surely *the wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee.*

The *wrath of man* (ſays the Apoſtle) *accompliſheth not the righteouſneſs of God*, how then can it accompliſh his praiſes? And this is the Second thing propounded.

Are Grapes gathered of Thorns, or Figs of Thiſtles? Surely no; therefore I called this praiſe not the fruit or proper effect of mans wrath, but the event or conſequent of it, by the efficacy of Divine Providence. *The wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee.*

The uſe which thou wilt make of it ſhall tend to thy praiſe. Thou wilt produce ſuch affects from it, both in the Church and upon thine

thine Enemies, when thou ſuffereſt thy wrath to break forth, as ſhall furniſh more matter of thy praiſes than if thou hadſt altogether reſtrained it. To inſtance this in ſome few particulars.

'Tis the fury of the Churches Enemies, that has made known to the World the Invincible Courage and Patience of the Saints: Thoſe Ages that have been moſt monſtruous in Perſecution, have moſt of all grac'd Chriſtianity. Had there been no Perſecuting Emperours, who ſhould have heard of thoſe Primitive Martyrs, that triumph'd over the Cruelty of their Torments? Were there no Perſecution, nor Peril, nor Sword, againſt Believers, we ſhould not have heard the Apoſtle ſay immediately after the mention of thoſe, *In all theſe we are more than Conquerours*; they could not have been ſo much as Conquerours, had there been no Conflict.

Again, as the wrath of man praiſes God in the Invincible Patience of the Saints, ſo likewiſe in the unmoveable ſtability of the Church. Is it not wonderful how ſo ſmall and weak a Company as the Church hath often been reduced to, yea, hath always been, in reſpect of the World, could eſcape the mouths of ſo many Lions, ſo many enraged Enemies that were ready to devour it? And that we may ſee that this tends ſolely to the praiſe of her great Protector, look the Churches Song penned by the Royal Prophet, it is the 124 *Pſalm*: *If it had not been the*

Lord that was on our ſide, when men roſe up againſt us, then they had ſwallowed us up quick. The great Monarchies and Kingdoms of the World, that have riſen with ſo much ſplendour, have had their periods, and been buried in the Duſt. That Golden-headed and Silver-bodied Image, degenerated into worſe Metal as it went lower, and the brittle feet was the cauſe of the fall and breaking of all the reſt; but the Kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt, though deſpicable in the World, and expoſed to the wrath of the World in all Ages, ſtands firm and cannot be removed. There is a common Emblem of the Winds blowing from all Quarters, and upon the Globe of the Earth, being in the middle of them, is written *Immobilis.* This fitly reſembles the Church. Why? It ſeems to be the ſport of all the Winds, but is indeed ſo Eſtabliſhed, that all of them, yea, *the very Gates of Hell cannot prevail againſt it.* Now the more the Churches Enemies labour and moil themſelves to undo her, the more doth their weakneſs, and the power of her Lord appear; ſo that thus *the wrath of man doth praiſe him.*

When was the Church free from the Worlds wrath? (To ſay nothing of the Church of the *Jews*) Did not thoſe Wicked Emperours of *Rome* think to have made the Chriſtian Church ſhort lived, to have drowned her, newly Born, in Floods of her own Blood? And in latter Ages, who knows not the Cruelties that have been practiſed by the *Turk* in

in the *East*, And the Proud Prelate of *Rome* in the *West*? By which ſhe hath ſometimes been brought to ſo obſcure and low a point, that if you can follow her in Hiſtory, 'tis by the tract of her Blood; and if you would ſee her, 'tis by the light of thoſe fires in which her Martyrs have been burnt. Yet hath ſhe ſtill come through, and ſurvived all that wrath, and ſtill ſhall, till ſhe be made perfectly Triumphant.

Further: *Mans wrath* tends to Gods praiſe in this, That God, giving way to it, does ſo manage it by his ſublime Providence, that it often directly croſſes their own ends, that conduces manifeſtly to his. *Pharaoh* thought that his dealing more cruelly with the *Jews* in their tasks and burdens was wiſdom: *Let us work wiſely* (ſays he.) But whereas their ordinary ſervility was become familiar to them, and they were tamed to it, that ſame acceſſion of new Tyranny did prepare and diſpoſe the *Iſraelites* for a deſire of departure, and their departure made way for *Pharaoh*'s deſtruction. Undigeſtable Inſolency and Rage, haſtening to be great, makes Kingdoms caſt them off, which would have been far longer troubled with their wickedneſs, had it been more moderate; ſurely then the wrath of man commends the wiſdom of God, when he makes him by that contrive and afford the means of his own downfal. *Job* 18. 7. *The ſteps of his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraightened, and his own counſel ſhould caſt him*

down, ſays *Bildad*. And that is a ſad fall; as that Eagle that was ſhot with an Arrow trimmed with her own Feathers.

But to cloſe this point. It is out of all queſtion, that the deſerved puniſhment of mans unjuſt wrath, doth always glorifie the Juſtice of God, and the more he gives way to their wrath, the more notable ſhall be both their Puniſhment and the Juſtice of it; and though God ſeems neglective of his people and of his praiſe, while mans wrath prevails, yet the truth is, he never comes too late to vindicate his care of both: And when he defers longeſt, the Enemy pays dear Intereſt for the time of forbearance. In his Eternal Decree, he reſolved to permit the courſe of mans wrath for his own Glory, and when the period which he hath fixed is come, he ſtops mans wrath, and gives courſe unto the Juſtice of his own. Nor is there then any poſſibility of eſcaping; he will right himſelf, and be known by executing Judgment. Surely *the wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee.* And that is the Third thing propounded, The *Infallibility of the Event.*

The Author of Nature governs all his Creatures, each in a ſuitable way to the Nature he hath given them: He maintains in ſome things a natural Neceſſity of working, Contingency in others; and in others, Liberty. But all of them are ſubject to this *Neceſſity* of effecting inevitably his Eternal purpoſes; and this Neceſſity is no way repugnant to the due

Liberty

Liberty of mans Will. Some entertain and maintain the Truth; ſome Plot; others act and execute againſt it; ſome pleaſe themſelves in a wiſe Neutrality, and will appear ſo indifferent, that it would ſeem they might be accepted of all ſides for Judges of Controverſies: And all theſe find no leſs Liberty to wind and turn themſelves whither they pleaſe, than if no higher hand had the winding of them. Shall not only the Zeal of the Godly, but even the Wrath of the Enemy, and the cold Diſcretion of the Neutral, all tend to his praiſe whoſe Supream Will hath a ſecret, but a ſure and infallible ſway in all their Actions; whilſt ſome Paſſengers ſit, ſome walk one way, ſome another; ſome have their faces towards their Journeys end, ſome theirs back turned upon it; this wiſe Pilot does moſt skilfully guide the Ship to arrive with them all, at his own Glory. Happy they that propound and intend his Glory as he himſelf does, for in them *ſhall the riches of his mercy be glorified*; they that oppoſe him loſe this happineſs, but he is ſure not to loſe his Glory for all that, to wit, the Glory of his Juſtice. His right hand ſhall find out all his Enemies; *ſurely the wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee.*

The conſideration of this truth, *thus* in ſome meaſure unfolded, may ſerve to juſtifie the truly wiſe Diſpenſation of God againſt our Imaginary Wiſdom; were the matter referr'd to our modelling, we would aſſign the

Church conſtant Peace and Proſperity for her Portion, and not conſent that the leaſt air of trouble ſhould come near her; we would have no Enemies to moleſt her, nor ſtir againſt her, or if they did ſtir, we would have them to be preſently repreſt, and theſe in our Judgment, would be the faireſt and moſt glorious tokens of his love and power, whoſe Spouſe ſhe is. But this carnal wiſdom is enmity againſt God, and to the Glory of God, which riſes ſo often out of the wrath of his Enemies. Had God cauſed *Pharaoh* to yield at the very firſt, to the releaſe of his people, where had been the fame of thoſe Miraculous Judgments in *Egypt*, and Mercies on the *Iſraelites*, the one ſetting out and illuſtrating the other? Where had been that Name and Honour that God ſays he would gain to himſelf, and that he did gain out of *Pharaoh*'s final Deſtruction, making that Stony hearted King, and his Troops, *ſink like a ſtone in the waters*, as *Moſes* Sings? Obſerve his proud boaſtings immediately foregoing his Ruin, *I will purſue*, ſays he, *I will overtake, I will divide the ſpoil, my luſt ſhall be ſatisfied on them; I will draw my ſword, and my hand ſhall deſtroy them:* Soon after, the Sea quenches all this heat. Commonly big threatnings are unhappy *preſages* of very ill ſucceſs. That Hiſtorian ſays well of God * ; and indeed, as he abhors theſe boaſtings, ſo he delights in the abaſing of the lofty heart whence they flow, and it is his Prerogative to gain praiſe to himſelf out

* *Deus neminem alium, quam ſeipſum ſinit de ſe magnifice Sentire.* Herodot.

of

of their wrath, *Haſt thou an arm like God* (ſays the Lord to *Job*) *then look upon the proud and bring them low*, Job 40. 9. When *Sennacherib* came up againſt *Jeruſalem*, his blaſphemies and boaſtings were no leſs vaſt and monſtrous than the number of his Men and Chariots; good *Hezekiah* turned over the matter unto God, ſpreading the Letter of Blaſphemies before him; God undertook the War, and aſſured *Hezekiah* that the *Aſſyrian* ſhould not ſo much as ſhoot an Arrow againſt the City, *but return the ſame way he came*, 2 *Kings* 19. And the Deliverance there promiſed and effected, is conceived to have been the occaſion of penning this very *Pſalm*, *Surely when an Angel did in one night ſlay* 185000 *in their Camps*, that wrath and thoſe threats, tended exceedingly to the praiſe of the God of *Iſrael*. The hook that he put in *Sennacheribs* Noſtrils, (as the Hiſtory ſpeaks) to pull him back again, was more remarkable than the fetters would have been if he had tied him at home, or hindred his march with his Army.

Who is he then that will be impatient becauſe of Gods patience, and Judge him ſlack in Judgment, while the rage of the Wicked prevails a while? Know that he is more careful of his own Glory than we can be, and the greater heighth mans wrath ariſes to, the more Honour ſhall ariſe to him out of it. Did not his Omnipotency ſhine brighter in the flames of that Furnace into which the Children

Children were caſt, than if the Kings wrath had been at firſt cooled? Certainly, the more both it and the Furnace had their heat augmented, the more was God glorified. *Who is that God* (ſaid he blaſphemouſly and proudly,) *that can deliver you out of my hands?* A queſtion indeed highly diſhonouring the Almighty, but ſtay till the real anſwer come, and not only ſhall that wrath praiſe him, but that very ſame Tongue, though inured to Blaſphemy, ſhall be taught to bear a main part in the confeſſion of theſe praiſes. Let *Julian.* that Apoſtate Emperour go taunting the Head and Tormenting the Members of that myſtical Body, his cloſing with νενικας γαλιλαῖε, *Thou haſt overcome*, O Galilean, (meaning Chriſt) ſhall help to verifie that: whether its courſe be ſhorter or longer, Mans wrath ends always in Gods praiſe. In like manner, the cloſing of the Lions mouth ſpake louder to his praiſe that ſtopt them, than if he had ſtopt *Daniels* enemies in the beginning of their wicked deſign; ſo hot was their rage, that the Kings favourable inclination to *Daniel* (of which in other caſes Courtiers uſe to be ſo devout obſervers) yea his conteſting and pleading for him, did profit him nothing, but they hurried their King to be execution of their unjuſt Malice, though themſelves were convinced, that nothing could be found againſt him, but only concerning the Law of his God. *Dan.* 6. *verſe* 14. It is ſaid, *he ſet his heart upon him to deliver him, and laboured to do it till the going down*

down of the Sun, and then thoſe Counſellers, and Counſels of darkneſs overcame him, but upon this black night of their prevailing wrath, followed immediately a bright morning of praiſes to *Daniel*'s God. When the Lions that were ſo quiet company all night to *Daniel*, made ſo quick a Breakfaſt of thoſe accurſed Courtiers that had maliciouſly accuſed him. *Even ſo let thine Enemies periſh, O Lord, and let thoſe that love thee, be as the Sun when he goes forth in his might.*

The other Propoſition concerns the limiting of this wrath. *The remainder of wrath thou wilt reſtrain.*

To take no notice for the preſent, of divers other readings of theſe words, the ſenſe of them, as they are here very well rendred, may be briefly this, that whereas the wrath of Man to which God gives way, ſhall praiſe him, the reſt ſhall be *curb'd*, and *bound up*, as the word is, no more of it ſhall break forth than ſhall contribute to his glory. Here ſhould be conſidered divers ways and means, by which God uſeth to ſtop the heady courſe of Mans wrath, and hinder its proceeding any further. But only,

Let us take out of it this leſſon, *That the moſt compendious way to be ſafe from the violence of Men, is to be in terms of friendſhip with God.* Is it not an incomparable priviledge to be in the favour, and under the protection of one whoſe power is ſo tranſcendent, that no enemy can ſo much as ſtir without his leave? Be perſwaded

perſwaded then, Chriſtians, in theſe dangers that are now ſo near us, every one to draw near to him; remove what may provoke him; let no reigning ſin be found either in your Cities, or in your Villages, for he is a holy God. Is it a time to multiply provocations now, or is it not rather high time to be humbled for the former? What ſhameleſs Impiety is it, to be now Licentious or Intemperate? To be Proud, to Oppreſs or Extort? To prophane Gods Day, and Blaſpheme his Name? All theſe ſins, and many others, abound amongſt us, and that avowedly: Without abundant of Repentance for theſe we ſhall ſmart, and the wrath of our Enemies, though unjuſt in them, ſhall praiſe God in our Juſt puniſhment; though doubtleſs, he will own his Church, and be praiſed likewiſe in the final puniſhment of their wrath, that riſe againſt it. There is a remarkable expreſſion in the *99 Pſalm*, of Gods dealing with his people, *he was favourable to them though he took vengeance on their Inventions.* A good Cauſe and a Covenant with God, will not ſhelter an Impenitent people from ſharper Correction. 'Tis a ſad Word God ſpeaks by his Prophet to his own people, *I my ſelf* (ſays he) *will fight againſt you.* A dreadful Enemy; and none indeed truly dreadful but he. O prevent his anger and you are ſafe enough. If perverſe Sinners will not hear, yet let thoſe that are indeed Chriſtians mourn in ſecret, not only for their own Sins, but let them beſtow ſome tears likewiſe

wiſe upon the ſins of others. Labour to appeaſe the wrath of God, and he will either appeaſe mans wrath, or howſoever, will turn it jointly to our Benefit and his own Glory. Let the fear of the moſt high God, who hath no leſs power over the ſtrongeſt of his Enemies than over the meaneſt of his Servants; let his fear (I ſay) poſſeſs all our hearts, and it will certainly expel that ignoble and baſe fear of the wrath of man. See how the Prophet oppoſes them in that 8th. of *Iſaiah*, *Fear not their fear* (ſays he) *nor be afraid, but ſanctifie the Lord, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread*; fear not but fear. This holy fear begets the beſt courage; the breaſt that is moſt fill'd with it, abounds moſt in true Magnanimity. Fear thus, that you may be confident, not in your ſelves, though your policy and ſtrength were great: *Curſed is the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm*; but confident in that God, who is too wiſe and vigilant to be ſurprized, too mighty to be foiled, and too rich to be out-ſpent in proviſion; who can ſuffer his Enemy to come to the higheſt point of apparent advantage, without any inconvenience, yea, with more renown in his Conqueſt. And ſo a Chriſtian who is made once ſure of this (as eaſily he may) is little careful about the reſt, his Love to God prevailing over all his affections, makes him very indifferent what becomes of himſelf or his deareſt friends, ſo God may be glorified.

What

What though many fall in the quarrel (which God avert) yet it is ſufficient that Truth in the end ſhall be Victorious. Have not the Saints in all Ages been content to convey pure Religion to Poſterity, in ſtreams of their own Blood not of others? Well, hold faſt by this concluſion, that God can limit and bind up the moſt violent wrath of man, that though it ſwell it will not break forth. The ſtiffeſt Heart, as the current of the moſt impetuous Rivers, is in his hand, to appoint its Channels, and turn it as he pleaſeth; yea, it is he that hath ſhut up the very Sea with Bars and Doors, and ſaid, *Hitherto ſhalt thou come and no further, here ſhall thy proud waves be ſtayed,* Job 38. 10, 11, *verſes.* To ſee the Surges of a rough Sea come in towards the Shoar, a man would think that they were haſtening to ſwallow up the Land, but they know their limits, and are beaten back into foam: Though the Waves thereof toſs themſelves as angry at their reſtraint, yet the ſmall Sand is a check to the great Sea, *yet can they not prevail, though they roar, yet can they not paſs over it,* ſays *Jer.* 5. *verſe* 22.

The ſum is this: What God permits his Churches Enemies to do, is for his own further Glory; and reſerving this, there is not any wrath of man ſo great, but he will either ſweetly calm it, or ſtrongly reſtrain it. *To him be praiſe,* &c.

SERMON

SERMON XII.

Pſal. CXII. 7.

He ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord.

ALL the ſpecial deſigns of men agree in this, They ſeek ſatisfaction and quietneſs of mind, that is, happineſs. This then is the great queſtion, Who is the happy man? 'Tis here reſolved, *verſe* 1. *Bleſſed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth in his Commandments.*

This Bleſſedneſs unfolded as a rich Landskip, that we may view the well mixed Colours, the Story and Tiſſure of it. The whole Alphabet in Capital Letters; and take all and ſet them together, 'tis a moſt full compleat Bleſſedneſs, not a Letter wanting to it. Amongſt the reſt, that we have in theſe words, is of a greater magnitude and brightneſs than many of the reſt, *He ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings.*

Well may it begin with a Hallelujah, a Note of praiſe to him in whom this Bleſſedneſs lies. O what a wretched Creature were man,

man, if not provided to ſuch a Portion, without which is nothing but diſappointment; and thence the racking torment and vexation of a diſqueited mind, ſtill purſuing ſomewhat that he never overtakes.

The firſt words as the Inſcription; The Bleſſedneſſes of that man, *&c.* So the particulars follow: Where outward Bleſſings are ſo ſet, as that they look and lead higher, pointing at their end, the infinite goodneſs whence they flow, and whither they return and carry along with them this happy man.

And theſe promiſes of outward things often evidently accompliſh'd to the Righteous, and their Seed after them, and that commonly after they have been brought very low. But when 'tis otherways with them they loſe nothing, 'tis good for many, yea, 'tis good for all the Godly, that have leſs of theſe lower things to raiſe their eye to look after higher; the eye of all, both of theſe that are held ſomewhat ſhort, and for thoſe that have abundance in the World.

Theſe Temporal promiſes more abounding, and more frequently fullfilled, in their very kind, in the times of the Law, yet ſtill the right is conſtant, and all Ages do give clear examples of the truth of this word; where it is thus, 'tis a bleſſing created by its aſpect to this promiſe, and ſo differs from the proſperity of Ungodly men, and where 'tis otherways with the Righteous and their Seed, 'tis no ſhift but a moſt ſolid comfort to turn their eyes to a higher Compenſation. But

But howſoever it go this ſtill holds: *He ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings*, notwithſtanding the hardeſt news that can come to his ears, of any thing that concerns himſelf or his Children, or the reſt of Gods Children in his charge in the World. *His heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord.*

Firſt, let us take a little of the Character of this Bleſſed man. Who is it that is thus undaunted? *The man that feareth God.*

All the paſſions are but ſeveral ebbings and flowings of the Soul, and their motions are the ſigns of its temper; which way it is carried, that is mainly to be remark'd by the beating of its pulſe. If our deſires, and hopes, and fears be in the things of this World, and the intereſt of Fleſh, this is their diſtemper and diſorder, the Soul is in a continual Fever; but if they move Godwards, then is it compos'd and calm in a good temper and healthful point, fearing and loving him, deſiring him, and nothing but him, waiting for him, and truſting in him. And when any one affection is right, and in a due aſpect to God, all the reſt are ſo too, for they are radically one, and he is the life of that Soul that is united to him; and ſo in him it moves in a peculiar Spiritual manner, as all do naturally in the dependance of their Natural Life, on him that is the Fountain of Life.

Thus we have here this fear of God; as often elſewhere ſet out as the very ſubſtance of Holineſs and evidence of Happineſs. And

that we may know there is nothing either baſe or grievous in this fear, we have joined with it delight and truſt, *Delighteth greatly in his Commandments*, which is that Badge of Love to him to obſerve them, and that with delight, and with great exceeding delight; ſo then, the fear is not that which Love caſts out, but that which Love brings in. This fear follows and flows from Love, a fear to offend, whereof nothing ſo tender as Love; and that, in reſpect of the greatneſs of God, hath in it withal a humble reverence. There is in all Love a kind of reverence, a cautious and reſpective wariness towards the party loved; but eſpecially in this, where not only we ſtand in a lower relation, as Children to our Father, but the goodneſs that draws our love doth infinitely tranſcend our meaſures and reach, therefore there is a *rejoycing with trembling*, and an awful love, the *fearing the Lord and his goodneſs*, Hoſ. 3. *ult.* This both *fear* and *truſt*, the Heart toucht by the Spirit of God, as the Needle toucht with the Loadſtone, looks ſtraight and ſpeedily to God, yet ſtill *with trembling*, being filled with this holy fear.

That delighteth] Oh! this is not only to do them, but to do them with delight; ſomewhat within is Connatural and Symbolical: Yea, this very Law it ſelf writ within, not ſtanding as a hard Task-maſter over our head, but impreſt within as a ſweet principle in our hearts, and working from thence naturally.

This

This makes a Soul find pleaſure in purging out of ſenſual pleaſures, and eaſe in doing violence to corrupt ſelf, even undoing it for God, having no will but his; the remainders ſin and ſelf in our Fleſh, will be often ri-of ſing up, but this predominant Love diſpels them. So this fear works with delight.

And further, that we may know how ſerene and ſweet a thing it is, it is here likewiſe joyned with confidence, *Truſting*, a quickning confidence always accompanying it; and ſo, undoubtedly, it is a bleſſed thing. *Bleſſed is he that feareth.* *Fear* ſounds rather quite contrary, hath an air of miſery; but add, *Whom*? He that *feareth the Lord*, that touch turns it into Gold. He that ſo fears fears not, he ſhall not be afraid; all petty fears are ſwallowed up in this great fear, as a Spirit inur'd with great things is not ſtir'd nor affected at all with ſmall matters. And this great fear is as ſweet and pleaſing as theſe little fears are anxious and vexing; ſecure of other things. If my God be pleaſed, no matter who is diſpleaſed; no matter who deſpiſe me, if he account me his; though all forſake me, my deareſt friends grows eſtranged, and look another way, if he reject me not, that is my only fear; and for that I am not perplexed I know he will not: As they anſwered *Alexander* when he ſent to enquire what they moſt feared, thinking poſſibly they would have ſaid *Leſt he ſhould invade them.* Their anſwer was, *We fear nothing but*

leſt Heaven ſhould fall upon us; which they did not fear neither. A Believer hath no fear but of the diſpleaſure of Heaven, the anger of God to fall upon him, he fears that; that is, accounts that only terrible; but yet he doth not fear, doth not apprehend it will fall on him, is better perſwaded of the goodneſs of his God, ſo this *fear* is ſtill joined with *truſt*, as here, ſo often elſewhere, *Pſal* 33. 18. and 40. 3. and 147. 11.

There is no turbulency in this fear, 'tis calm and ſweet; even that moſt terrible Evil, that which this fear properly apprehends and flies, *Sin*, yet the fear of that goes not to a diſtraction. Though there is little ſtrength, and many and great Enemies, mighty *Anakims* of tentations from without, and corruption within, and ſo good reaſon for a holy humble fear and ſelf diſtruſt, yet this ſhould not beat us off; yea, is moſt fit to put us on to truſt in him who is our Strength. Courage! the day ſhall be ours, though we may be often foyled and down, and ſometimes almoſt at a hopeleſs point, yet *our head* is on high, he hath conquered for us, and ſhall conquer in us; therefore, upon this confidence, ſo fear as not to fear. *Why ſhould I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels ſhall compaſs me about?* Pſal. 49. 5. Which I take is ſome *grievous affliction*, and that with a Viſage of puniſhment of ſin; guiltineſs to be read in it, yet not fear. If I truſted in Wealth, and boaſt my ſelf in the multitude

of

of Riches, then that being in hazard I muſt fear; leaning on that, it failing, I might fall. But this is my confidence, *ver.* 15. *God will redeem my Soul from the power of the Grave,* for he ſhall receive me; wealth cannot, but he can. It *buys* not a man out from his hand, but he buys from the hand of the Grave. So the word is.

For the viſible Heavens, even their fall and the diſſolution of Nature, would not affright a Believer, *Pſalm.* 41. 1. *Si fractus illabatur orbis*, &c.

Alas! moſt perſons have dull or dim apprehenſions, and ſhallow impreſſions of God, therefore they have little either of this *fear* or this *truſt*. God is not in all their thoughts, but how to compaſs this or that deſign, and if they miſs one then to another; they are caſt from one wave upon another, and if at any time they attain their purpoſe find it but Wind, a handful of nothing; far from what they fancied it.

Oh *M. B.* my deſire is that the faces of your Souls were but once turn'd about, that they were towards him, looking to him, continually fearing him, *delighting*, *truſting* in him, making him your All. Can any thing ſo elevate and ennoble the Spirit of a Man, as to contemplate and converſe with the pure ever bleſſed Spring, and Father of Spirits? Beg that you may know him, that he would reveal himſelf to you, for otherwiſe no teaching can make him known, 'tis to light Candles

to ſeek the Sun, to think to attain to this knowledge without his own revealing it. If he hide his face, who then may behold him? Pray for this quickening knowledge, ſuch a knowledge as will affectually work this happy *fear* and *truſt*.

You that have attained any thing of it, deſire and follow on to know the Lord; particularly, ſo as your hearts may repoſe on him; ſo fear as you may not fear. He would have our Spirits calm and quiet, for when they are in a hurry and confuſion, they are then fit for nothing, all within makes a jarring unpleaſant noiſe, as of an Inſtrument quite out of Tune.

This fear of God is not, you ſee, a perplexing, doubting, and diſtruſt of his love; on the contrary, 'tis a fixed reſting and truſt on his love. Many that have ſome truth of Grace, are through weakneſs filled with diſquieting fears; ſo poſſibly, though they perceive it not, it may be in ſome a point of wilfulneſs, a little latent undiſcern'd affectation of ſcrupling and doubting, placing much of Religion in it. True, where the Soul is really ſolicitous about its intereſt in God, that argues ſome Grace, but being vexingly anxious about it, it argues that Grace is low and weak; a ſparkle there is even diſcovered by that ſmoak, but the great ſmoak ſtill continuing, and nothing ſeen but it, argues there is little Fire, little Faith, little Love.

And this, as it is unpleaſant to thy ſelf, ſo

to

to God, as ſmoak to the eyes. What if one ſhould be always queſtioning with his friend whether he loved him or no, and upon every little occaſion were ready to think he doth not, how would this diſreliſh their Society together, though truly loving each other? The far more excellent way, and more pleaſing both to our ſelves and to God, were to reſolve on humble truſt, reverence and confidence, moſt afraid to offend, delighting to walk in his ways, loving him and his will in all, and then reſting perſwaded of his love though he chaſtiſe us; and even, though we offend him, and ſee our offences in our chaſtiſements, yet he is good, plenteous in redemption, ready to forgive. Therefore let *Iſrael* truſt and hope, let my Soul roll it ſelf on him, and adventure there all its weight; he bears greater matters, upholding the frame of Heaven and Earth, and is not troubled nor burden'd with it.

The heart of a man is not ſufficient for Self-ſupport, therefore naturally it ſeeks out ſome other thing to lean and reſt it ſelf on. The unhappineſs is, for the moſt part, that it ſeeks to things below it ſelf; theſe being both ſo mean and ſo uncertain, cannot be a firm and certain ſtay to it. Theſe things are not fixed themſelves, how can they then fix the heart? Can a man have firm footing on a Quagmire, or moving Sands? Therefore men are forc'd in theſe things ſtill to ſhift their ſeat, and ſeek about from one to another, ſtill rolling

and unſettled. The Believer only hath this advantage, he hath a reſt high enough and ſure enough, out of the reach of all hazards. *His heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord*, Pſal. 81. 2.

The Baſis of this happineſs is, *He truſteth on the Lord.* So the heart is fixed; and ſo fixed, it fears no ill tidings.

This *truſt* is grounded on the Word of God, revealing the Power and All-ſufficiency of God, and withal, his Goodneſs, his offer of himſelf to be the ſtay of Souls, commanding us to reſt on him. People wait on I know not what perſwaſions and *aſſurances*, but I know no other to build Faith on, but the *Word of Promiſe*, the truth and faithfulneſs of God opened up, his wiſdom, and power, and goodneſs, as the ſtay of all theſe, that renouncing all other props will venture on it, and lay all upon him. He that believes, ſets to his Seal that God is true; and ſo he is ſealed for God, his Portion and Intereſt ſecured. *Iſa.* 7. 9. *If you will not believe, ſurely ye ſhall not be eſtabliſhed.*

This is the way to have peace aud aſſurance, which many look for firſt, *Thou will keep him in perfect peace whoſe mind is ſtay'd on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee*, Iſa. 26. 3. So here, the heart is fixed by *truſting*.

Seek then clearer apprehenſions of the faithfulneſs and goodneſs of God, hearts more enlarged in the notion of free Grace, and the abſolute truſt due to it; thus ſhall they be more

more eſtabliſh'd and fix'd in all the rollings and changes of the World.

Heart fixed] Or prepared, ready, preſt, and in Arms for all Services; reſolved not to give back, able to meet all adventures, and ſtand its ground. God is unchangeable, and therefore Faith is invincible that ſets the heart on him, faſtens it there on the Rock of Eternity: Then let Winds blow, and Storms ariſe, it cares not

This firm and cloſe cleaving unto God, hath in it of the affection, which is inſeparable from this truſt, *Love* with *Faith*; and ſo a hatred of all ways and thoughts that alienate and eſtrange from God, that remove and unſettle the heart. The holieſt warieſt heart is ſurely the moſt believing and fixed heart; if a Believer will adventure on any one way of ſin, he ſhall find that will unfix him, and ſhake his confidence, more than ten thouſand hazards and aſſaults from without: Theſe are ſo far from moving, that they ſettle and fix the heart commonly more, cauſe it to cleave the cloſer and nearer unto God, but ſinful Liberty breeds inquiet, and diſturbs all. Where Sin is, there will be a Storm; the Wind within the Bowels of the Earth makes the Earthquake.

Would you be quiet, and have peace within in troublous times, keep near unto God, beware of any thing that may interpoſe betwixt you and your confidence. *It is good for me* (ſay the *Pſalmiſt*) *to be near God*; not only

only to draw near, but to keep near, to cleave to him, and dwell in him. So the Word. Oh the ſweet Calm of ſuch a Soul amidſt all Storms; thus once truſting and fixed, then no more fear. Not afraid of *evil tidings*, not any ill hearing. Whatſoever ſound is terrible in the Ears of men, the noiſe of War, news of Death, even the ſound of the Trumpet in the laſt Judgment; he hears all this undiſquieted.

Nothing is unexpected being once fixed on God; then the heart may put caſes to it ſelf, and ſuppoſe all things imaginable, the moſt terrible, and look for them. Not troubled before trouble with dark and diſmal apprehenſions, but ſatisfied in a quiet unmoved expectation of the hardeſt things. Whatſoever it is, though particularly not thought on before, yet the heart is not afraid of the news of it, becauſe fixed truſting on the Lord; nothing can ſhake that foundation, nor diſſolve that union, therefore no fear. Yea, this aſſurance ſtays the heart in all things, how ſtrange and unforeſeen ſoever to it, *all foreſeen to my God*, on whom I truſt, yea, fore-contrived and ordered by him. This the impregnable Fort of a Soul, all is at the diſpoſe and command of my God, *My father rules all, what need I fear?*

Every one truſts to ſomewhat; as for honour, and eſteem, and popularity, they are airy vain things, but riches ſeem a more ſolid work and fence, yet they are but a Tower

in

in conceit, not really. *Prov.* 18. 11. *The rich mans wealth is his ſtrong City, and as an high Wall in his own conceit*, but *the name of the Lord is a ſtrong Tower indeed*, ver. 10. This the thing, all ſeek ſome fence and fixing; here it is, we call you not to vexation and turmoil, but from it. And as St. *Paul* ſaid, *Act.* 17. *Whom ye ignorantly worſhip, him declare I unto you*; ye blindly, and fruitleſsly ſeek after the ſhew. The true aiming at this fixedneſs of mind will make that, though they fall ſhort, yet by the way they will light on very pretty things that have ſome vertue in them, as they that ſeek the Philoſophers Stone! But the Believer hath the thing, the ſecret it ſelf, of Tranquillity and Joy, and this turns all into God, their Iron Chains into a Crown of Gold, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17, 18.

This is the bleſt and ſafe eſtate of Believers. Who can think they have a ſad heavy life? Oh! it is the only lightſome ſweet chearful condition in the World, the reſt of men are poor, rolling, unſtayed things, every report ſhaking them, as the leaves of Trees are ſhaken with the Wind, *Iſa.* 7. Yea, lighter than ſo, as the Chaff that the Wind drives to and fro at its pleaſure, *Pſal.* 1. Would men but reflect and look in upon their own hearts, 'tis a wonder what vain childiſh things the moſt would find there, glad and ſorry at things as light as the toys of Children, at which they laugh and cry in a breath; how eaſily puft up with a thing or word that pleaſeth

ſeth us, Bladder like, ſwell'd with a little air, and it ſhrinks in again in diſcouragements and fear upon the touch of a Needles point, which gives that air ſome vent.

What is the life of the greateſt part but a continual toſſing, betwixt vain hopes and fears, all their days ſpent in theſe? Oh! how vain a thing is a man even in his beſt eſtate, while he is nothing but himſelf, his heart not united and fixed on God, diſquieted in vain, how ſmall a thing will do it: He need no other but his own heart, it may prove diſquietment enough to it ſelf, his thoughts are his Tormentors.

I know ſome men are, by a ſtronger Underſtanding and Moral Principles, ſomewhat raiſed above the vulgar, and ſpeak big of a conſtancy of mind, but theſe are but flouriſhes, an acted bravery; ſomewhat there may be that will hold out in ſome trials, but far ſhort of this fixedneſs of Faith, troubles may ſo multiply, as to drive them at length from their poſture, and come on ſo thick with ſuch violent blows, as will ſmite them out of their Artificial Guard, diſorder all their *Seneca* and *Epictetus*, and all their own calm thoughts and high reſolves. The approach of Death, though they make a good Mien, and ſet the beſt Face on't; Or if not yet ſome kind of terrour may ſeize on their Spirits, which they are not able to ſhift off. But the Soul truſting on God is prepared for all, not only for the Calamities of War, Peſti-

lence,

lence, Famine, Poverty, or Death, but in the ſadeſt apprehenſions of Soul, above hope, believes under hope, even in the darkeſt Night, caſts Anchor in God, repoſes on him when he ſees no light. *Iſa.* 50. 10. *Yea, though he ſlay me*, ſays, *Job*, *yet will I truſt on him*; not only though I die, but though he ſlay me; when I ſee his hand lift up to deſtroy me, yet from that ſame hand will I look for Salvation.

M. B. My deſire is to ſtir in your hearts an ambition after this bleſt Eſtate of the Godly that fear the Lord, and truſt on him, and ſo fear no other thing, the common Revolutions and Changes of the World, and thoſe that in theſe late times we our ſelves have ſeen, and the likelihood of more and greater coming on, ſeem dreadful to weak minds, but let theſe perſwade us the more to prize and ſeek this fixed unaffrighted Station; no fixing but here where we make a Vertue of a Neceſſity.

Oh! that you would be perſwaded to break off from the vile ways of Sin, that embaſe the Soul and fill it full of Terrours, and diſingage them from the Vanities of this World to take up in God, to live in him wholly, to cleave to, and depend on him; to eſteem nothing beſide him. Excellent was the anſwer of that Holy man to the Emperour, firſt eſſaying him with large proffers of Honour and Riches, to draw him from Chriſt. *Offer theſe things* (ſays he) *to Children*,

dren, I regard them not. Then after he try'd to terrifie him with threatning. *Threaten* (ſaid he) *your effeminate Courtiers, I fear none of theſe things.*

Seek to have your hearts eſtabliſhed on him by the Faith of *Eternal Life*, and then it will be aſham'd to diſtruſt him in any other thing. Yea, truly, you will not much regard, nor be careful for other things how they be, 'twill be all one, the better and worſe of this moment, the things of it, even the greateſt, being both in themſelves ſo little and worthleſs, and of ſo ſhort continuance.

Well chuſe you; but all reckon'd and examin'd, I had rather be the pooreſt Believer, than the greateſt King on Earth. How ſmall a Commotion, ſmall in its beginning, may prove the overturning of the greateſt Kingdom, but the Believer is Heir to a Kingdom that cannot be ſhaken; the mightieſt and moſt victorious Prince, that hath not only loſt nothing, but hath been gaining new Conqueſts all his days, is ſtopt by a ſmall Diſtemper in the middle of his courſe. He returns to his Duſt, then his vaſt deſigns fall to nothing, *in that very day his thoughts periſh:* But the Believer, in that very day, is ſent to the poſſeſſion of his Crown, that is his Coronation day; all his thoughts are accompliſht.

How can you affright him? Bring him word his Eſtate is ruined, yet my Inheritance is ſafe, ſays he. Your Wife, or Child,

or

or dear Friend, is dead, yet my Father lives. You your ſelf muſt die; well then, I go home to my Father, and to my Inheritance.

For the publick troubles of the Church, doubtleſs it is both a moſt pious and generous temper, to be more deeply affected for theſe then for all our private ones, and to reſent common Calamities of any people; but eſpecially of Gods own people, hath been the Character of men near unto him. Obſerve the pathetical ſtrains of the Prophets bewailing, when they foretel the deſolation even of Foreign Kingdoms, much more for the Lords choſen people, ſtill mindful of *Sion*, and mournful for her diſtreſſes, *Jer.* 9. 1. and the whole Book of *Lamentations*. *Pſal.* 137. If *I forget thee, O Jeruſalem.* Pious Spirits always publick, as even brave Heathens for the Commonwealth: So he, in that of *Horace**.

Little regarding himſelf, but much ſolicitous for the publick. Yet even in this, with much Compaſſion, there is a Calm in a Believers mind. How theſe agree none can tell but they that feel it, finds amidſt all hard news, yet ſtill a fixed heart truſting. Satisfied in this, Deliverance ſhall come in due time, *Pſal.* 102. 13. And that in thoſe Judgments that are inflicted, man ſhall be humbled and God exalted, *Iſa.* 2. 11. and. 5. 15, 16. And that in all tumults and changes, and ſubverſion of States, ſtill his Throne is fixed, and with that the Believers heart likewiſe,

Pſal.

* *Invenit inſomni volventem publica cura fata virum, caſuſque urbis, cunctiſque timentem, ſecurumque ſui.*

Pſal. 93. So *Pſal.* 29. 10. *The Lord ſitteth upon the floud:* Yea, *the Lord ſitteth King for ever.* Or ſate in the Floud, poſſibly referring to the general Deluge, yet, that then God ſate quiet, and ſtill ſitteth King for ever. He ſteer'd the Ark, and ſtill guides his Church through all. So *Pſal.* 46. throughout that whole *Pſalm.* In all Commotions, the Kingdom of Chriſt ſhall be ſpreading and growing, and the cloſe of all ſhall be full Victory on his ſide, and that's ſufficient.

Of this, a ſingular example is in *Job*, who was not daunted with ſo many ill hearings, but ſtood as an unmov'd Rock amidſt the Winds and Waves.

Ille velut rupes immota manebat.

In this condition there is ſo much ſweetneſs, that if known, a man might ſuſpect himſelf rather ſelfiſhly taken with it, than purely loving God; ſuch joy in believing, or at leaſt, ſuch peace, ſuch a ſerene calmneſs, is in no other thing in this World, nothing without or within a man to be named to this of truſting on his *goodneſs*, he is God, and on his *faithfulneſs*, giving his promiſe for thy Warrant. He commands thee to roll thy ſelf on him. The holy Soul ſtill truſts in the darkeſt apprehenſions; if it is ſuggeſted thou art a Reprobate, yet will the Soul ſay, I will ſee the utmoſt, and hang by the hold I have, till I feel my ſelf really caſt off, and will not willingly fall off. If I muſt be ſeparated from him he ſhall do it himſelf, he ſhall ſhake me off while I would

would cleave to him. Yea, to the utmoſt I will look for mercy, and will hope better; though I found him ſhaking me off, yet will I think he will not do it. It is good to ſeek after all poſſible aſſurance, but not to fret at the want of it, for even without theſe aſſurances, which ſome Chriſtians hang too much upon, there is in ſimple truſt, and reliance on God, and in a deſire to walk in his ways, ſuch a Fort of Peace, as all the aſſaults in the World are not able to make a breach in. And to this add, that unſpeakable delight in walking in his fear joined with this truſt. The noble ambition of pleaſing him, makes one careleſs of pleaſing or diſpleaſing all the World. Beſides, the delight in his Commandments, ſo pure, ſo juſt a Law, Holineſs, victory over Luſts, and Temperance, hath a ſweetneſs in it that preſently pays it ſelf, becauſe his Will.

'Tis the Godly Man alone, who by this fixed conſideration in God, looks the grim Viſage of Death in the Face with an unappal'd mind. It damps all the joys, and defeats all the hopes of the moſt proſperous, proudeſt, and wiſeſt Worldings. As he ſaid, when ſhot, *Avocaſti ab optima demonſtratione.* It ſpoils all their Figures and fine Devices. But to the Righteous, there is hope in his Death: He goes through it without fear, without *Caligula*'s *Quo vadis.* Though Riches, Honours, and all the Glories of this World, are with a man, yet

Archimedes.

he fears, yea, he fears the more for these, because here they must end. But the good man looks Death out of Countenance, in the words of *David*, *Though I walk through the Valley and Shadow of Death, yet will I fear no Evil, for thou art with me.*

SERMON, XIII.

SERMON. XIII.

Matth. XIII. 3.

And he ſpake many things unto them in Parables, ſaying, Behold a Sower went forth to ſow, &c.

THE rich bounty of God hath furniſht our Natural Life, not barely for ſtrict neceſſity, but with great abundance, many kinds of Beaſts, and Fowls, and Fiſhes, and Herbs, and Fruits, has he provided for the uſe of man. Thus our Spiritual Life likewiſe is ſupported with a variety; the Word, the food of it, hath not only all neceſſary Truths once ſimply ſet down, but a great variety of Doctrine, for our more abundant Inſtruction and Conſolation. Amongſt the reſt, this way of Similitudes hath a notable commixture of profit and delight.

Parables not unfolded and underſtood, are a Veil as here to the multitude, and in that are a great Judgment, as *Iſa.* 6. 9. cited here, but when cleared and made tranſparent, then they are a Glaſs to behold Divine things in, more commodiouſly and ſuitably to our way; all things are big with ſuch reſemblan-

ces, but they require the dexterous hand of an active Spirit to bring them forth. This way, besides other advantages, is much grac'd and commended by our Saviours frequent use of it.

That here fitted to the occasion; multitudes coming to hear him, and many not a whit the better: He instructs us in this point, the great difference between the different hearts of men; so that the same Word hath very different success in them.

In this Parable we shall consider these three things: (1) *The Nature of the Word in it self.* (2) The *sameness and commonness of the dispensation.* (3) *The difference of the operation and production.*

The word *Seed*, hath in it a productive Vertue to bring forth Fruit according to its kind; that the Fruit a *new life*; not only a new habitude and fashion of life without, but a *new nature*, a new kind of life within, new thoughts, a new estimate of things, new delights and actions. When the Word reveals God, his greatness and holiness, then it begets pious fear and reverence, and study of conformity to him; when it reveals his goodness and mercy, it works love and confidence; when it holds up in our view Christ Crucified, it Crucifies the Soul to the World, and the World to it; when it represents these rich things laid up for us, that blest Inheritance of the Saints, then it makes all the lustre of this World vanish, shews how poor it is, weans

weans and calls off the heart from them, raiſing it to theſe higher hopes, and ſets it on the project of a Crown; and ſo is a Seed of noble thoughts, and of a ſuitable behaviour in a Chriſtian, as in the Expoſition of this Parable, 'tis called the *Word of the Kingdom.*

Seed, an *Immortal Seed,* as St. *Peter* calls it, ſpringing up to no leſs than an Eternal Life.

This teaches us, 1ſt. highly to eſteem the great goodneſs of God to theſe places and times, that were moſt bleſt with it. *Pſal.* 147. 19, 20. *He ſheweth his Word unto* Jacob, *his Statutes and his Judgment unto* Iſrael; *he hath not dealt ſo with any Nation, and as for his Judgments they have not known them.*

2. That the ſame diſpenſation is to be Preach'd indifferently to all where it comes, as far as the ſound can reach. And thus it was very much extended in the firſt promulgating of the Goſpel; *their ſound went out through all the earth,* as the Apoſtle alluſively applies that of the *Pſalmiſt.*

3. This teaches alſo Miniſters, liberally to ſow this Seed at all times, according to that, *Eccl.* 11. 6. *In the morning ſow thy ſeed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand,* &c. Praying earneſtly to him, that is, the Lord, not only of the Harveſt, but of the Seed time, and of this *Seed* to make it fruitful; this is his peculiar work. So the Apoſtle acknowledges, 1 *Cor.* 3. 6. *I have planted,* Apollo's *watered, but God gave the increaſe.*

4. Hence we alſo learn, the ſucceſs to be

very different. This is moſt evident in men; one caſt into the mould and faſhion of the Word, and ſo moulded and faſhioned by it; another no whit changed; one heart melting before it, another ſtill hardned under it.

So then, this is not all, to have the Word and hear it, as if that would ſerve turn, and ſave us (as we commonly fancy) The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord: Multitudes under the continual ſound of the Word, yet remain lifeleſs and fruitleſs, and die in their ſins, therefore we muſt enquire, and examine ſtrictly, what becomes of it, how it works, what it brings forth? and for this very end, this Parable declares ſo many are fruitleſs. We need not preſs them, they are three to one here; yea, that were too narrow, the odds is far greater, for theſe are but the kinds of unfruitful grounds, and under each of theſe huge multitudes of individuals, ſo that there may be a hundred to one, and it is to be feared, in many Congregations, it is more than ſo.

Whence is then the difference? Not from the Seed, that is the ſame to all; not from the Sower neither, for though theſe be divers, and of different abilites, yet it hangs little or nothing on that. Indeed, he is the fitteſt to Preach that is himſelf moſt like his Meſſage, and comes forth not only with a handful of this Seed in his hand, but with ſtore of it in his heart, the Word dwelling richly in him; yet howſoever, the Seed he ſows, being this Word of

Life,

Life, depends not on his qualifications in any kind, either of common Gifts, or ſpecial Grace. People miſtake this much, and it is a carnal conceit to hang on the advantages of the Miniſter, or to eye that much, the ſure way is to look up to God, and to look into thine own heart; an unchang'd unſoftned heart, as an evil Soil, diſappoints the Fruit. What though ſowen by a weak hand, yea, poſſibly a foul one, yet if received in a clean and honeſt heart, it will fructifie much. There is in the World a needleſs and prejudicial differencing of men, out of which people will not come for all we can ſay.

The firſt bad ground is a *High-way*. Now we have a Commentary here, whence we may not, nor will not depart, it is authentick and full. *Ver.* 19. They that underſtand not, groſs brutiſh Spirits, that perceive not what is ſaid, are as if they were not there, ſit like Blocks, one Log of Wood upon another, as he ſaid. This is our Brutiſh multitude, what pity is it to ſee ſo many, ſuch as have not ſo much as a natural apprehenſion of Spiritual Truths? The common Road of all Paſſengers, of all kind of fooliſh brutiſh thoughts, ſeeking nothing but how to live, and yet know not to what end, have no deſign, trivial, High way hearts, all tentations paſs at their pleaſure, *prophane* as *Eſau*, which ſome Criticks draw from a word ſignifying the *threſhold*, the outer ſtep that every foul foot treads on. *Lapis ſuper Lapidem in Theatro.*

Theſe retain nothing, there is no hazard

of that, and yet the Enemy of Souls, to make all ſure, leſt peradventure ſome word might take root unawares, ſome Grain of this Seed, he is buſie to pick it away; to take them off from all reflexion, all ſerious thoughts, or the remembrance of any thing ſpoken to them. And if any common word is remembred, yet it doth no good, for that is trodden down as the reſt, though the moſt is pickt up, becauſe it lies on the Road. So expreſt by St. *Mark* 4. 4.

The ſecond is *Stony ground.* Hard hearts, not ſoftned and made penetrable, to receive in deeply this ingrafted word with meekneſs, with humble yieldance and ſubmiſſion to it, the *Rocks,* yet in theſe there is often ſome receiving of it, and a little ſlender moiſture above them, which the warm air, may make ſpring up a little; they *receive with Joy,* have a little preſent delight in it, are moved and taken with the Sermon, poſſibly to the ſhedding of ſome tears, but the miſery is, there is a want of depth of Earth; it ſinks not.

No wonder if there is ſome preſent delight in theſe, therefore the Word of the Kingdom, eſpecially if skilfully and ſenſibly delivered, by ſome more able Speaker. Let it be but a fancy, yet it is a fine pleaſant one, ſuch love as the Son of God to die for Sinners, ſuch a rich purchaſe made as a Kingdom, the Word of the Kingdom, ſuch Glory and Sweetneſs, therefore the deſcription of the new *Jeruſalem, Apoc.* 21. Suppoſe it be but a Dream,

or

or one of the Viſions of the Night, yet 'tis paſſing fine; it muſt needs pleaſe a mind that heeds what is ſaid of it. There is a natural delight in Spiritual things, and thus the word of the Prophet, as the Lord tells him, was as a Minſtrels voice, a fine Song ſo long as it laſts, but dies out in the air; it may be, the reliſh and air of it will remain a while in the Imagination, but not long, even that wears out, and is forgot. So here it is heard with Joy, and ſome is ſpringing up preſently, they commend it, and it may be, repeat ſome paſſages, yea, poſſibly deſire to be like it, to have ſuch and ſuch Graces as are recommended, and upon that think they have them, are preſently good Chriſtians in their own conceit, and to appearance ſome change is wrought, and it appears to be all that it is, but it is not deep enough, they talk poſſibly too much, more than thoſe whoſe hearts receive it more deeply; there it lies hid longer, and little is heard of it. Others may think it is loſt, and poſſibly themſelves do not perceive that it is there, they are exerciſed and humbled at it, and find no good in their own hearts; yet there it is hid, as *David* ſays, *Thy Word have I hid in my heart.* And as Seed in a manner dies in a ſilent ſmothering way, yet it is in order to the fructifying, and to the reviving of it, it will ſpring up in time, and be fruitful in its ſeaſon; with patience, as St. *Luke* hath it, of the good ground; not ſo ſuddenly, but much more ſurely and ſolidly.

But

But the moſt are preſentany Muſhrome Chriſtians, ſoon ripe, ſoon rotten, the Seed goes never deep, it ſprings up indeed, but any thing blaſts and withers it; little root in ſome, if Trials ariſe, either the heat of Perſecution without, or a Tentation within; this ſudden Spring ſeed can ſtand before neither.

Oh Rocky hearts! How ſhallow, ſhallow, are the Impreſſions of Divine things upon you? Religion goes never farther than the upper ſurface of your hearts, few deep thoughts of God, and of Jeſus Chriſt, and the things of the World to come, all are but ſlight and tranſient glances.

The third is *Thorny-ground.* This relates to the Cares and Pleaſures, and all the Intereſts of this Life. See St. *Mark* 4. 1. and St. *Luke* 8. 5. All theſe together are the *Thorns,* and theſe grow in hearts that do more deeply receive the Seed, and ſend it forth, and ſpring up more hopefully than either of the other two, and yet choak it. Oh! the pity.

Many are thus almoſt at Heaven, ſo much deſire of Renovation, and ſome endeavours after it, and yet the Thorns prevail. Miſerable Thorns! The baſe things of a periſhing life drawing away the ſtrength of affections, ſucking the ſap of the Soul. Our other Seed and Harveſt, our Corn and Hay, our Shops and Ships, our Tradings and Bargains, our Suits and Pretenſions for Places and Employments of Gain or Credit, Husband, and Wife, and Children, and Houſe, and Train,

our

our Feaſtings and Entertainments, and other Pleaſures of Senſe, our Civilities and Complements; and a world of thoſe in all the World are theſe Thorns, and they overſpread all. *The luſt of the eye, the luſt of the fleſh, and the pride of life.*

And for how long is all the advantage and and delight of theſe? Alas! that ſo poor things ſhould prejudice us of the rich and bleſſed increaſe of this Divine Seed.

The laſt is *good Ground.* A good and honeſt heart; not much fineneſs here, not many queſtions and diſputes, but honeſt ſimplicity, ſweet ſincerity, that is all, a humble ſingle deſire to eye, and to do the will of God, and this from love to himſelf. This makes the Soul abound in the fruits of Holineſs, receiving the Word as the ground of it; different degrees are indeed, ſome thirty, ſome ſixty, and ſome an hundred fold, yet the loweſt aiming at the higheſt, not reſting ſatisfy'd; yet growing more fruitful, if thirty laſt year, deſiring to bring forth ſixty this.

This is the great point, we ought to examine it, for much is ſowen and little brought forth; our God hath done much for us, what more could be done? Yet when Grapes were expected, wild Grapes produced, what becomes of all? Who grow to be more ſpiritual, more humble and meek, more like Chriſt, more ſelf-denying, fuller of love to God, and one to another? Some, but alas! few. All the Land is ſowen, and that plentifully,

tifully, with the good Seed: But what comes for the moſt part? Cockle and no Grain. *In felix lolium.*

We would do all other things to purpoſe, and not willingly loſe our end; not Trade and gain nothing; buy and ſell, and live by the loſs; not plow and ſow, and reap nothing. How ſenſible do we feel one ill year, and ſhall this alone be loſt Labour, that well improv'd were worth all the reſt? Oh! how much more worth than all? Shall we only do the greateſt buſineſs to the leaſt purpoſe? Bethink your ſelves, what do we here? why come we here? if we ſtill remain as proud and paſſionate, and as ſelf-will'd as before, what will all great Bargains, and good Years, and full Barns, avail within a while? That word, *Thou Fool, this night ſhall they fetch away thy Soul*, how terrible will it be?

We think we are wiſe in not loſing our labour in other things? why, 'tis all loſt, even where moſt gained. What amounts it to: Caſt up: *Vanity and vexation of Spirit* is the total ſum; and in all our projecting and buſsling, what do we but *ſow the Wind*, and *reap the Whirl-wind*? Sow Vanity, and reap Vexation?

This Seed alone being fruitful, makes rich and happy, ſprings up to *eternal life*. Oh that we were wiſe, and that we would at length learn to hear every Sermon as on the utmoſt edge of time, at the very brink of Eternity, for any thing we know for our ſelves,

ſelves, or any of us may be really ſo; however, it is wiſe and ſafe to do as if it were ſo. Will you be perſwaded of this? It were a happy Sermon if it could prevail, for the more fruitful hearing of all the reſt henceforward: we have loſt too much of our little time; and thus, with the Apoſtle, *I beſeech you, I beſeech you, receive not the grace of God in vain.*

Now that you may be fruitful, examine well your own hearts, pluck up, weed out, for there are ſtill Thorns, ſome will grow, but he is the happieſt man that hath the ſharpeſt eye, and the buſieſt hand, ſpying them out, and plucking them up. Take heed how you hear, think it not ſo eaſie a matter. *Plow up, and ſow not among Thorns*, Jeremiah 4.

And above all Pray, Pray before, after, and in hearing, dart up deſires to God, he is the Lord of the Harveſt, whoſe influence doth all; the difference of the Soil makes indeed the difference of ſucceſs, but the Lord hath the priviledge of bettering the Soil. He that framed the heart, changes it when and how he will. There is a curſe on all grounds naturally, that fell on the Earth for mans ſake, but fell more on the ground of mans own heart within him: *Thorns and Briars ſhalt thou bring forth.* Now 'tis he that denounc'd that Curſe, that alone hath power to remove it, he is both the Soveraign owner of the Seed, and changer of the Soil, turns a Wilderneſs into *Carmel* by his Spirit; and no ground, no heart, can be good till he change it.

And

And being changed, much care muſt be had ſtill of manuring, for ſtill that is in it, that will bring forth many Weeds; is a Mother to them, and but a Step-mother to this Seed. Therefore

Conſider it, if you think this concerns you; *he that hath an ear to hear*, as our Saviour cloſes, *let him hear*. The Lord apply your hearts to this work, and though diſcouragements ariſe without, or within, and little preſent Fruit appear; but Corruption is rather ſtronger and greater, yet watch and pray, wait on, it ſhall be better, this Fruit is to be brought forth with patience, as St: *Luke* hath it. And this *Seed*, this *Word*, the Lord calls by that very name, the very *Word of his patience*; keep it, hide it in thy heart, and in due time it ſhall ſpring up. And this patience ſhall be put to it but for a little while, the day of Harveſt is at hand, when all in any meaſure fruitful in Grace, ſhall be gathered into Glory.

SERMON, XIV.

2 Cor. VII. 1.

Having therefore theſe promiſes (dearly beloved) Let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God.

IT is a thing both of unſpeakable ſweetneſs and uſefulneſs for a Chriſtian, often to conſider the excellency of that eſtate to which he is called. It cannot fail to put him upon very high reſolutions, and carry him on in the divine ambition of being daily more ſuitable to his high calling, and hopes; Therefore, theſe are often ſet before Chriſtians in the Scripture, and are preſt here by the Apoſtle upon a particular occaſion of the avoidance of near Combinements with Unbelievers. He mentions ſome choice promiſes that God makes to his own people, and of their near Relation to, and communion with himſelf. And upon theſe he enlarges and raiſes the exhortation to the univerſal indeavour of all holineſs, and that as aiming at the very top and high degree of it.

In

In the words are. 1. The Thing to which he would perſwade. 2. The Motive. The Thing, Holineſs in its full extenſion and intenſion, *Purging our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, and perfecting holineſs in the fear of God.*

The purging out of filthineſs and perfecting of holineſs expreſt, (as uſually they are diſtinguiſht) thoſe two parts of renewing grace, *Mortification* and *Vivification.* But I conceive they are not ſo truely different parts as a different notion of the ſame thing, the decreaſe of ſin, and increaſe of grace being truely one thing, as the diſpelling of darkneſs, and augmenting of Light: So here the one rendred, as the neceſſary reſult, yea, as the equivalent of the other; the ſame thing indeed, purging from filthineſs, and in ſo doing perfecting holineſs; perfecting holineſs, and in ſo doing purging from filthineſs. That *Perfection*, by which is meant a growing progreſſive advance towards perfection.

The words without ſtraining gives us as it were the ſeveral dimenſions of Holineſs. The *breadth* purging all filthineſs; the *length* parallel to Mans compoſure, running all along through his Soul and Body, purging filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit; the *highth* perfecting holineſs; the *depth*, that which is the bottom whence it riſes up, a deep impreſs of the fear of God. *Perfecting holineſs in the fear of God.*

Cleanſe our ſelves] It is the Lord that is the

the ſanctifier of his people, he purges away their droſs and tin, he pours clean water, according to his promiſes, yet doth he call to us to cleanſe our ſelves, even having ſuch promiſes, *Let us cleanſe our ſelves.* He puts a new life into us, and cauſes us to act, and excites us to excite it, and call it up to act in the progreſs of ſanctification. Men are ſtrangely inclined to a perverſe conſtruction of things, tell them that we are to act, and work, and give diligence, then they would fancy a doing in their own ſtrength, and be their own Saviours: Again, tell them that God works all our works in us, and for us, then they would take the eaſe of doing nothing; if they cannot have the praiſe of doing all, they will ſit ſtill with folded hands and uſe no diligence at all. But this is the corrupt logick of the fleſh, its baſe ſophiſtry. The Apoſtle reaſons juſt contrary, *Phil.* 2. 12. *It is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do*; Therefore would a carnal heart ſay, we need not work, or at leaſt, may work very careleſly. But he infers, *Therefore let us work out our Salvation with fear and trembling*, in the more humble obedience to God, and dependance on him, not obſtructing the influences of his Grace, and by ſloth, and negligence provoking him to withdraw or abate it. Certainly many in whom there is truth of grace, are kept low in the growth of it, by their own ſlothfulneſs, ſitting ſtill, and not beſtirring themſelves, and exerciſing

the proper actions of that ſpiritual Life, by which it is entertained and advanced.

From all filthineſs.] All kind of ſinful pollutions; not as Men commonly do reform ſome things, and take to themſelves diſpenſations in others, at leaſt in ſome one peculiar ſin, their *Miſtreſs* and their *Herodias*, their *Dalilah*. No parting with that, yea, they rather forego many other things, as a kind of compoſition for the retaining of that.

Of fleſh and ſpirit.] The whole Man muſt be purified and conſecrated to God, not only refined from the groſs outward acts of ſin, but from the inward affection to it, and motions of it, that ſo the heart go not after it, *Pſal.* 131. Which under reſtraints of outward committing ſin, it may do, and very often does, *as the* Iſraelites *luſted after the fleſh pots, their hearts remained in* Egypt *ſtill, though their bodies were brought out.* This is then to be done, affection to ſin to be purged out, that is to cleanſe the ground, not only to lop off the branches, but to dig about, and looſen and pluck up the root, though ſtill fibers of it will ſtick, yet we ought ſtill to be finding them out, and plucking them up.

Further, Theſe not only of the inner part of all ſins, but of ſome ſins that are moſt or wholly inward, that hang not much on the body, nor are acted by it, thoſe filthineſſes of the Spirit that are leſs diſcerned then thoſe of the Fleſh, and as more hardly diſcerned, ſo when diſcerned, more hardly purged out,

Pride,

Pride. Selflove, Unbeleif, Curioſity, &c. Which though more retired and refined ſins, yet are pollutions and defilements, yea of the worſt ſort, as being more ſpiritual, are *filthineſſes of the Spirit.* Fleſhly pollutions are things of which the Devil's not capable in themſelves, though they excite Men to them, and ſo they are called unclean Spirits, but the higheſt rank of ſins, are thoſe that are properly *Spiritual wickedneſſes.* Theſe in Men are the chief ſtrengths of Satan, the inner works of theſe forts and ſtrongholds, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4.

Many that are not much tempted to the common groſs ſenſualities, have poſſibly (though an inclination to them) yet a kind of diſdain; and, (through education, and morality, and ſtrength of reaſon, with ſomewhat of natural conſcience) are carried above them; who yet have many of theſe heights, thoſe lofty imaginations that riſe againſt God, and the obedience of Chriſt, all which muſt be demoliſht.

Perfecting holineſs.] Not content with low meaſures ſo much as keeps from Hell. But aſpiring towards perfection, aiming high at ſelf victory, ſelf denial, and the love of God, purer and hotter, as a fire growing and flaming up, and conſuming the Earth. Though Men fall ſhort of their aim, yet it is good to aim high, they ſhall ſhoot ſo much the higher, though not full ſo high as they aim, thus we ought to be ſetting the ſtate of perfection in our eye, reſolving not to reſt con-

tent below that, and to come as near it as we can, even before we come at it, *Phil.* 3. 11. 12. This, to act as one that hath ſuch a Hope, ſuch a State in view, and is ſtill advancing towards it.

In the fear of God] No working but on firm ground, no ſolid endeavours in holineſs where it is not founded in a deep heart, a reverence of God, a deſire to pleaſe him and to be like him, which ſprings from Love.

This moſt Men are either ſtrangers to wholly, or are but ſlight and ſhallow in it, and therefore make ſo little true progreſs in holineſs.

Then there is the motive, having theſe Promiſes.] Being called to ſo fair an eſtate, ſo excellent a condition to be the people, yea, the Sons and Daughters of God, therefore they are called to the coming forth from *Babel*, and the ſeparating themſelves from ſin, and purging it out, holineſs is his Image in his Children, the more of it the more ſuitable to that bleſſed Relation, and Dignity, and the firmer are the hopes of the inheritance of Glory.

Conſider Sin as a filthineſs, hate it. Oh, how ugly, and vile is luſt, how deformed is ſwelling Pride, and all ſin is an averſion from God, a caſting the noble Soul into the mire, the defacing all its beauty. Turning to preſent things it pollutes it ſelf with them, that he who was clad in ſcarlet embraces

embraces the dunghil, as *Jeremy* in another ſenſe laments.

Purity of things is an unmixture and ſimplicity correſponding with their own being, and ſo is the Soul when elevated above the Earth, and Senſe, and united unto God, contemplating him, and delighting in him, all inordinate bent to the Creatures, or to it ſelf, (which is the firſt and main diſorder) doth defile and debaſe it. And the more it is ſublim'd and freed from it ſelf the purer, and more heavenly it grows, and partakes the more of God, and reſembles him the more.

This then to be our main ſtudy, firſt to ſearch out our iniquities, the particular defilements of our Nature, not only groſs filthineſſes, Drunkenneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, *&c.* But our love of this Earth, or of Air, or Vanity of mind, our Self will and Self-ſeeking. Moſt, even of Chriſtians, are ſhort ſighted in their own ſecret evils, the filthineſſes of Spirit eſpecially; and uſe little diligence in this enquiry, they do not ſeek Light from God, to go in before him, and to lead them into themſelves, as the Prophet had in the diſcovery of Idolatries at *Jeruſalem*. Oh, that we could once ſee what heaps of abominations lie hid in us, one behind another.

Then having ſearcht out, we muſt follow on, to purge out, not to paſs over, nor ſpare any, but to delight moſt in caſting

out the beſt beloved ſin, the choiceſt Idol, that hath had moſt of our ſervice and ſacrifices, to make room for Jeſus Chriſt.

And never ceaſe in this work, for ſtill there is need of more purging, one dayes work in this, diſpoſes for, and engages to a further, to the next; for as ſin is purged out Light comes in, and more clear diſcoveries are made of remaining pollutions. So then ſtill, there muſt be progreſs, leſs of the World, and more of God in the heart every day. Oh, this is a ſweet courſe of Life, what gain, what preferment, to be compared to it?

And in this 'tis good to have our ambition growing, the higher we riſe, to aſpire ſtill the higher, looking farther than before, even toward the perfection of holineſs; it is not much we can here attain to, but ſure, 'tis commonly far leſs than we might, we improve not our condition, and advantages as we might do, the world is buſie driving forewards their deſigns, Men of ſpirit are animated, both by better, and worſe ſucceſs; if any thing miſcarry, it ſets them on the more eagerly to make it up in the right management of ſome other deſign, and when they proſper in one thing, that enables and incourages them to attempt further, ſhall all things ſeem worth our pains? are only Grace and Glory ſo cheap in our account, that the leaſt diligence of all goes that way? Oh! ſtrange deluſion! Now

Now our cleanſing is, to be managed by all holy means: Word and Sacrament more wiſely and ſpiritually uſed than commonly with us; and private Prayer, that purifies and elevates the Soul, takes it up into the Mount, and makes it ſhine; and particularly ſupplicating for the Spirit of holineſs, and victory over ſin, is not in vain, it obtains its deſires of God, the Soul becoming that which it is fixedly ſet upon, Holy reſolution; Chriſtians much wanting in this, faint and looſe in their purpoſes: The conſideration of Divine Truths, the myſteries of the Kingdom, the hope of Chriſtians, yea rich and great Promiſes, that is particularly here the motive, theſe are all the means, holy means; they are as their end is the perfection of holineſs.

Having theſe Promiſes.] Now conſider whether it is better to be the Slaves of Satan, or the Sons of God, meaſure delight in God, with the low baſe pleaſures of ſenſe. *Bleſſed are the pure in heart, for they ſhall ſee God*; theſe gradually go on together, and are perfected together.

Why then is there ſuch an invincible love of ſin in the hearts of Men, at leaſt why ſo little love of holineſs, and endeavour after it, ſo mean thoughts of it, as a thing either indecent or unpleaſant, when 'tis the only noble, and the only delightful thing in the World, the Soul by other things is drawn below it ſelf, but by holineſs it

is raiſed above it ſelf, and made Divine. Pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon, the pleaſure of a moment exchanged for thoſe of Eternity: But even in the mean time, in this ſeaſon, the Soul is fed with Communion with God, one hour of which is more worth than the longeſt Life of the higheſt of the Worlds delights.

SERMON, XV

SERMON. XV.

Pſal. CXIX. 32.

I will run the way of thy Commandments, when thou ſhalt enlarge my heart.

TO deſire eaſe and happineſs, under a general repreſentation of it, is a thing of more eaſie and general perſwaſion. There is ſomewhat in Nature to help the argument, but to find beauty in, and be taken with the very *way* of holineſs that leads to it, is more rare, and depends on a higher principle. *Self-love* inclines a man to deſire the *reſt of Love*, but to love and deſire *the labour of Love*, is love of a higher and purer ſtrain. To delight, and be chearful in obedience, argues much love as the ſpring of it; that is the thing the holy *Pſalmiſt* doth ſo plentifully expreſs in this Pſalm, and he is ſtill deſiring more of that ſweet and lively affection that might make him yet more abundant in action. Thus here, *I will run*, &c. He preſents his deſire and purpoſe together, the more of this Grace thou beſtoweſt on me, the more ſervice ſhall I be able to do thee.

This is the top of his ambition, while others

others are ſeeking to enlarge their Barns, their Lands, or Eſtates, or Titles, Kings to enlarge their Territories or Authority, to incroach on Neighbouring Kingdoms, or be more abſolute in their own; inſtead of all ſuch *Enlargements*, this is *David*'s great deſire, *An enlarged heart to run the way of Gods Commandments.*

And theſe other (how big ſoever they ſound) are poor narrow deſires; this one is larger, and higher than them all, and gives evidence of a heart already large; but as it is miſerably in thoſe, 'tis happy in this, *much would ſtill have more.*

Let others ſeek more Money, or more Honour. Oh the bleſſed choice of that Soul that is ſtill ſeeking more *Love to God*, more affection, and more ability to do him ſervice, that counts all days and hours for loſt, that are not employed to this improvement, that hears the Word in publick, and reads it in private for this purpoſe, to kindle this love, or to blow the ſparkable, if any there be already in the heart, to raiſe it to a clear flame, and from a little flame to make it burn yet hotter, and purer, and riſe higher. But, above all means, is often preſenting this in Prayer to him, on whoſe influence all depends, in whoſe hand our hearts are, much more than in our own; it follows him with this deſire, and works on him by his own intereſt, though there can be really no acceſſion of gain to him by our ſervices;

yet

yet he is pleaſed ſo to account with us as if there were, therefore we may urge this: Lord give more, and receive more, *I will run the way of thy Commandments when thou ſhalt enlarge my heart.*

We have here in the words a required *diſpoſition*, and a ſuitable *reſolution.* The *diſpoſition* relates to the *reſolution*, as the means of fulfilling it, and the *reſolution* relates to the *diſpoſition*, both as the end of deſiring it, and as the motive of obtaining it. The *reſolution* occurs firſt in the words.

I will run, &c.] The way reſolved on, is that of Gods Commandments, not the road of the polluted World, not the crooked ways of his own heart, but the High way, the Royal way, the ſtraight way of the Kingdom, and that in the Notion of Subjection and Obedience, the *way of thy Commandments.* This man naturally ſtruggles againſt and repines at, to be limited and bounded by a Law is a reſtraint, and a vain man could poſſibly find in his heart to do many of the ſame things that are commanded, but he would not be ty'd, would have his liberty, and do't of his own choice. This is the *enmity of the carnal mind* againſt God, as the Apoſtle expreſſes it, *it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither can it be*; it breaks theſe Bonds, and caſts away the Cords of his Authority. This is Sin, the tranſgreſſion of a Law, and this made the firſt Sin ſo great, though in a matter one would

would think ſmal, the eating of the Fruit of a Tree; 'twas rebellion againſt the Majeſty of God, caſting off his Law and Authority, and aſpiring to an imagin'd Self-Deity. And this is ſtill the treaſonable Pride, or Independency, and Wickedneſs of our Nature, riſing up againſt God that formed us of nothing.

And this is the power and ſubſtance of Religion, the new Impreſs of God upon the heart, and Obedience and Reſignment to him, to be given up to him as entirely his, to be moulded and ordered as he will, to be ſubject to his Laws and Appointments in all things, to have every Action, and every Word, under a Rule and Law, and the penalty to be ſo high, Eternal Death. All this to a carnal or haughty mind is hard; not only every Action and Word, but even every Thought too muſt be ſubject; not ſo much as *thought free, every thought brought into Captivity*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks. And ſo the Licentious mind accounts it, not only the Affections and Deſires, but the very Reaſonings and Imaginations are brought under this Law.

2 Cor. 10. 5.

λόγισμοι.

Now to yield this as reaſonable, and due to God, to own his Soveraignty, and to acknowledge the Law to be Holy, Juſt and Good, to approve, yea, to love it, even there where it moſt contradicts, and controuls our own corrupt Will, and the Law of Sin in our Fleſh; this is true Spiritual Obedience,

dience, to ſtudy and enquire after the Will of God in all our ways, what will pleaſe him, and having found it, to follow that which is here called the *way of his Commandments*; to make this *our way*, and our buſineſs in the World, and all others things but Acceſſaries, and By-works; even thoſe lawful things that may be taken in, and uſed as helps in our way. As the Diſciples paſſing through the Corn pluckt the Ears, and did eat in paſſing, as a By-work, but their buſineſs was to follow their Maſter. And whatſoever would hinder us in this way, muſt be watched and guarded againſt; to reject that we muſt either remove and thruſt it aſide; or if we cannot do that, yet we muſt go over it, and trample it under foot, were it the thing, or the perſon that is deareſt to us in the World; till the heart be brought to this ſtate and purpoſe, it is either wholly void of, or very low and weak in the Truth of Religion.

We place Religion much in our accuſtom'd performances, to coming to Church, hearing and repeating of Sermons, and praying at home, keeping a road of ſuch and ſuch Duties. The *way of Gods Commandments* is more in doing than in diſcourſe. In many, Religion evaporates it ſelf too much out by the Tongue, while it appears too little in their *ways*. Oh! but this is the main, one Act of Charity, Meekneſs, or Humility, ſpeaks more than a days diſcourſe. All the

means

means we uſe in Religion are intended for a further end, which if they attain not they are nothing. This end is to mortifie and purifie the heart, to mould it to the way of Gods Commandments in the whole tract of our lives, in our private converſe one with another, and our retired ſecret converſe with our ſelves, to have God ſtill before us, and his Law our Rule in all we do, that he may be our meditation Day and Night, and that his Law may be our Counſellour, as this *Pſalm* hath it, to regulate all our Deſigns, and the Works of our Callings by it. *To walk ſoberly*, and *godly*, and *righteouſly in this preſent World*, to curb and croſs our own Wills where they croſs Gods, to deny our ſelves our own Humour and Pride, our Paſſions and Pleaſures, to have all thoſe ſubdued, and brought under, by the Power of the Law of Love within us. This, and nothing below this, is the end of Religion. Alas! amongſt multitudes that are called Chriſtians, ſome there may be that ſpeak and appear like it, yet how few are there that make this their buſineſs, and aſpire to this, *The way of Gods Commandments*

His intended courſe in this way, he expreſſes by *running*; 'tis good to be in this way even in the ſloweſt motions, Love will creep where it cannot go. But if thou art ſo indeed, then thou wilt long for a ſwifter motion; if thou do but creep, be doing, creep on, yet deſire to be enabled to go;

if

if thou goeſt, but yet halting, and lamely, deſire to be ſtrengthned to walk ſtraight, and if thou walkeſt, let not that ſatisfie thee, deſire to run. So here *David* did walk in this way; but he earneſtly wiſhes to mend his pace, he would willingly run, and for that end he deſires an enlarged heart.

Some diſpute and deſcant too much whether they go or no, and Childiſhly tell their ſteps, and would know at every pace whether they advance or no, and how much they advance, and thus amuſe themſelves, and ſpend the time of doing, and going, in queſtioning and doubting. Thus it is with many Chriſtians, but it were a more wiſe and comfortable way, to be endeavouring onwards, and if thou make little progreſs, at leaſt to be deſiring to make more; to be praying and walking. And praying that thou mayeſt walk faſter, and that in the end thou mayeſt run, not ſatisfied with any thing attained, but yet by that unſatisfiedneſs not to be ſo dejected as to ſit down, or ſtand ſtill, but rather excited to go on. So it was with St. *Paul*, *Philip.* 3. 13. *Forgetting theſe things which are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before, I preſs forward.* If any one thinks that he hath done well and run far, and will take a pauſe, the great Apoſtle is of another mind, *Not as if I had attained.* Oh no! far from that, he ſtill ſets forward, as if nothing were done, as a Runner, not ſtill looking back how much he hath

ἐπεκτεινόμενος.

hath run, but forward to what he is to run, ſtretching forth to that, inflamed with frequent looks at the mark and end; ſome are retarded by looking on what is paſt, as not ſatisfy'd, they have done nothing as they think, and ſo ſtand ſtill diſcontented; but even in that way, it is not good to look too much to things behind, we muſt forget them rather and preſs onwards.

Some, if they have gone on well, and poſſibly run a while, yet if they fall, then they are ready, in a deſperate Malecontent, to lie ſtill, and think all is loſt; and in this peeviſh fretting at their falls, ſome men pleaſe themſelves, and take it for Repentance, whereas indeed it is not that, but rather Pride and Humour; Repentance is a more ſubmiſſive humble thing. But this is that which troubles ſome men, at their new falls, eſpecially if after a long time of even walking or running (as they think) their project is now ſpoiled, their thoughts are broken off, they would have had ſomewhat to have rejoiced in, if they had ſtill gone on to the end, but being diſappointed of that, they think they had as good let alone, and give over. Oh! but the humble Chriſtian is better taught, his falls teach him indeed to abhor himſelf, they diſcover his own weakneſs to him, and empty him of Self-truſt, but they do not diſmay him to get up and go on, not boldly and careleſsly forgetting his fall, but in the humble ſenſe of

of it walking the more warily, but not the leſs ſwiftly; yea, the more ſwiftly too, making the more haſte to regain the time loſt by the fall. So then if you would run in this way, depend on the ſtrength of God, and on his Spirit, leading thee, that ſo thou mayeſt not fall, and yet if thou doſt fall, ariſe; and if thou art plunged in the mire, go to the Fountain opened for Sin and Uncleanneſs, and waſh there, bemoan thy ſelf before thy Lord; and if hurt, and bleeding by thy fall, yet look to him, deſire Jeſus to pity thee, and bind up, and cure thy Wound, waſhing off thy Blood, and pouring in of his own.

However it is with thee, give not over, faint not, run on; and that thou mayeſt run the more eaſily and expeditely, make thy ſelf as light as may be, *lay aſide every weight*, *Heb.* 12. 1, 2. Clog not thy ſelf with unneceſſary burdens of Earth, and eſpecially lay aſide that, that of all other things weighs the heavieſt, and cleaves the cloſeſt; the Sin that ſo eaſily beſets us, and is ſo hardly put off us, that folds ſo connaturally to us, and we therefore think will not hinder us much. And not only the Sins that are more outward, but the inner cloſe-cleaving Sins, the ſin that moſt of all ſits eaſily to us, not only our Cloak, but our inner Coat, away with that too, as our Saviour ſays in another caſe, and run the race ſet before us, our appointed Stage, and that with patience, under all oppoſitions, and diſcouragements from the World

without, and Sin within. And to encourage thee in this, look to such a Cloud of Witnesses that compasseth us about to further us; as Troubles, Tentations, and Sin, do to hinder us; they encountered the like sufferings, and were encounter'd with the like sins, and yet they run on and got home. *Alexander* would have run in the *Olympick* Games if he had had Kings to run with; now in this race, Kings, and Prophets, and Righteous Persons run; yea, all are indeed a Kingly Generation, each one Heir to a Crown as the prize of this Race.

And if these encourage thee but little, then look beyond them, above that Cloud of Witnesses, to the *Son*, the *Son of Righteousness*; looking off from all things here, that would either entangle thee, or discourage thee, taking thine eye off from them, and looking to him that will powerfully draw thee, and animate thee. Look to Jesus not only as thy Fore-runner in this Race, but also as thy Undertaker in it, the Author and Finisher of our Faith; his attaining the end of the Race is the pledg of thy attaining, if thou follow him chearfully on the same encouragements that he lookt to, *who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, and despised the Shame, and is now set down at the Right Hand of God.*

When thou shalt enlarge my heart.] In all beings, Nature is the principle of motion, and according as it is more or less perfect in

in its kind, thoſe motions that flow from it, are more or leſs vigorous. Therefore hath the *Pſalmiſt* good reaſon, to the end his Spiritual Courſe may be the ſtedfaſter, and the faſter, to deſire that the principle of it, *the heart*, may be more enabled and diſpoſed, which here he expreſſes by its being enlarged.

What this *enlargement of the heart* is, a mans own inward ſenſe ſhould eaſily explain to him; ſure it would, did men reflect on it, and were they acquainted with their own hearts, but the moſt are not; they would find the Carnal natural heart, a narrow contracted hampered thing, bound with Cords and Chains of its own twiſting and forging, and ſo incapable of walking, much leſs of *running* in this way of Gods Commandments, till it be freed and enlarged.

The Heart is taken generally in Scripture, for the whole Soul, the *Underſtanding*, and *Will*, in its ſeveral affections, and motions; and the ſpeech being here of an *enlarged heart*, it ſeems very congruous to take it in the moſt enlarged ſenſe.

It is ſaid of *Solomon*, that he had a *large heart* (the ſame word that's here) as *the ſand of the Sea ſhoar*; that is, a vaſt comprehenſive Spirit, that could fathom ſo much of Nature, greater and leſſer things. He ſpoke of Trees, *from the Cedar in* Lebanon, *to the Hyſop in the Wall*, and of *great Beaſts, and ſmall creeping things*.

Thus I conceive, the *enlargement of the heart* compriſeth the inlightning of the Underſtanding; there ariſes a clearer light there, to diſcern Spiritual things in a more Spiritual manner, to ſee the vaſt difference betwixt the vain things the World goes after, and the true ſolid delight that is in the *way of Gods Commandments*; to know the falſe bluſh of the pleaſures of Sin, and what deformity is under that painted Mask, and not be allured by it; to have enlarged apprehenſions of God, his excellency, and greatneſs, and goodneſs; how worthy he is to be obeyed and ſerved. This is the great dignity and happineſs of the Soul, all other pretenſions are low and poor, in reſpect of this. Here then is enlargement to ſee the purity and beauty of his Law, how juſt and reaſonable, yea, how pleaſant and amiable it is, that his Commandments are not grievous, that they are Beds of Spices, the more we walk in them, ſtill the more of their fragrant ſmell and ſweetneſs we find.

And then conſequently, upon the larger and clearer knowledge of theſe things, the heart dilates it ſelf in affection, the more it knows of God, ſtill the more it loves him, and the leſs it loves this preſent World; Love is the great enlarger of the heart to all obedience. Then nothing is hard, yea, the harder things become the more delightful.

All love of other things doth pinch and contract the heart, for they are all narrower than

than it ſelf, it is framed to that wideneſs in its firſt Creation, capable of enjoying God, though not of a full comprehending him; therefore all other things gather it in, and ſtraighten it from its natural ſize, only the Love of God ſtretches and dilates it, he is large enough for it, yea, it, in its fulleſt enlargement, is infinitely too narrow for him. Do not all find it, if they will ask themſelves, that in all other loves and purſuits in this World, there is ſtill ſomewhat that pinches? The Soul is not at its full ſize, but as a Foot in a ſtraight Shoe, is ſomewhere bound and pained, and cannot go freely, much leſs run, though another that looks on cannot tell where, yet each one feels it. But when the Soul is ſet free from theſe narrow things, and is raiſed to the love of God, then is it at eaſe, and at large, and hath room enough; 'tis both elevated and dilated. And this word ſignifies both a high raiſed Soul, and is ſometimes taken for *proud* and *lofty*, but there is a greatneſs and height of Spirit in the Love of God, and Union with him, that doth not vainly ſwell and lift it up, but with the deepeſt humility, joins the higheſt and trueſt Magnanimity; it ſets the Soul above the Snares that lie here below, in which moſt men creep and are intangled, in that *way of life that is on high to the Juſt*, as *Solomon* ſpeaks.

Good reaſon hath *David* to join theſe together, and to deſire the one as the ſpring and cauſe of the other. An *enlarged heart*, that

he might *run the way of Gods Commandments.*

Senſible Joys and Conſolations in God, do encourage and enlarge the heart, but theſe are not ſo general to all, nor ſo conſtant to any. Love is the abounding fixed ſpring of ready Obedience, and will make the heart chearful in ſerving God, even without thoſe felt comforts, when he is pleaſed to deny, or withdraw them.

In that courſe or race, is underſtood *conſtancy, activity*, and *alacrity*, and all theſe flow from the enlargement of the heart:

1. *Conſtancy*: A narrow enthralled heart, fetter'd with the love of lower things, and cleaving to ſome particular ſins, or but ſome one, and that ſecret, may keep foot a while in the way of Gods Commandments, in ſome ſteps of them, but it muſt give up quickly, is not able to run on to the end of the Goal, but a heart that hath laid aſide every weight, and the moſt cloſe-cleaving and beſetting ſin, as it is in that place to the *Hebrews*, hath ſtript it ſelf of all that may faulter or intangle it, it runs, and runs on, without fainting or wearying, 'tis at large, hath nothing that pains it in the race.

2. *Activity*: Not only holding on, but running, which is a ſwift nimble race; it ſtands not bargaining and diſputing, but once knowing Gods mind, there is no more queſtion or demur. I made haſte and delayed not, as in this *Pſalm*, the word is, *Did not ſtay upon*,

on, why, and wherefore, he ſtood not to reaſon the matter but run on. And this love, enlarging the heart, makes it abundant in the work of the Lord, quick and active, diſpatching much in a little time.

3. *Alacrity*: All done with chearfulnes, ſo no other conſtraint is needful, where this overpowering ſweet conſtraint of love is; I will run, not be hail'd, and drawn as by force, but *skip* and *leap,* as the Evangelick promiſe is, that the *Lame ſhall leap as an Hart, and the tongue of the dumb ſing: for in the wilderneſs ſhall waters break out, and ſtreams in the deſart,* Iſaiah 35. 6. The Spouſe deſires her Beloved *to haſten as a Roe and Hind on the mountains of Spices,* and ſhe doth ſo, and each faithful Soul runs towards him, to meet him in his way.

It is a ſad heavy thing to do any thing as in obedience to God, while the heart is ſtraightned, not enlarged towards him by his Divine Love, but that once taking poſſeſſion, and enlarging the heart, that inward principle of obedience, makes the outward obedience ſweet, 'tis then a natural motion; indeed, the Soul runs in the ways of God as the Sun in his courſe, which finds no difficulty, being naturally fitted and carried to that motion, he *goes forth as a Bridegroom, and rejoiceth as a ſtrong man to run a race.*

This is the great point that our Souls ſhould be ſtudious of, to attain more *evenneſs,* and *nimbleneſs,* and *chearfulneſs,* in the

ways of God, and for this end we ought to ſeek above all things, this *enlarged heart*; 'tis want of this makes us bog, and drive heavily, and run long upon little ground. Oh! my Beloved, how ſhallow and narrow are our thoughts of God? Moſt (even of thoſe that are truly Godly) yet are led on by a kind of inſtinct, and carried they ſcarce know how, to give ſome attendance on Gods Worſhip, and to the avoidance of groſs Sin, and go on in a blameleſs courſe; 'tis better thus, than to run to exceſs of *Riot*, and open Wickedneſs, with the Ungodly World. But, alas! this is but a dull, heavy, and Languid motion, where the heart is not enlarged by the daily growing Love of God; few, few are acquainted with that delightful Contemplation of God, that ventilates and raiſes this flame of Love, petty things bind and contract our Spirits, ſo that they feel little joy in God, little ardent active deſire to do him Service, to Crucifie Sin, to break and undo Self-love within us, to root up our own Wills to make room for his, that his alone may be ours, that we may have no Will of our own, that our daily work may be to grow more like him in the Beauty of Holineſs. You think it a hard ſaying to part with your Carnal Luſts, and Delights, and the common ways of the World, and to be ty'd to a ſtrict exact Converſation all your days. But oh! the reaſon of this is, becauſe the heart is yet ſtraightned, and enthralled by the baſe Love

of

of theſe mean things, and that is from the ignorance of things higher and better. One glance of God, a touch of his love will free and enlarge the heart, ſo that it can deny all, and part with all, and make an entire renouncing of all, to follow *Him*; it ſees enough in *Him*, and in *Him* alone, and therefore can neither quietly reſt on, nor earneſtly deſire any thing beſide *Him*.

Oh! that you would apply your hearts to conſider the excellency of this way of Gods Commandments; our wretched hearts are prejudiced, they think it melancholy and ſad. Oh! there is no way truly joyous but this. *They ſhall ſing in the ways of the Lord*, ſays the Prophet. Do not Men when their eyes are opened ſee a beauty in Meekneſs, and Temperance, and Humility, a preſent delightfulneſs and quietneſs in them, whereas in Pride, and Paſſion, and Intemperance, there is nothing but vexation, and diſquiet. And then conſider the end of this way, and this race in it, reſt and peace for ever, 'tis the way of peace both in its own nature, and in reſpect of its end. Did you believe that Joy and Glory that is ſet before you in this way, you would not any of you defer a day longer, but forthwith you'd break from all that holds you back, and enter into this way, and run on chearfully in it, the perſwaſion of theſe great things above would enlarge and greaten the heart, and make the greateſt things here very little in your eyes.

But

But would you attain to this enlarged heart for this race; as you ought to apply your thoughts to theſe Divine things, and ſtretch them on the promiſes made in the Word, above all, take *Davids* courſe, ſeek this enlargement of heart from Gods own hand, for it is here propounded and laid before God by way of requeſt, ſee what is my deſire, I would gladly ſerve thee better, and advance more in *the way of thy Commandments.* Now this I cannot do till my heart be more enlarged, and that cannot be but by thy hand, *When thou ſhalt enlarge my heart.* Preſent this ſuit often, 'tis in his power to do it for thee he can ſtretch and expand thy ſtraitened heart, can ſpread and hoyſe the Sails within thee, and then carry thee on ſwiftly; filling them not with the vain air of Mans applauſe, which readily run a Soul upon Rocks and ſplits it, but with the ſweet breathings and ſoft gales of his own Spirit, that carry it ſtraight to the deſired Haven.

Findeſt thou Sin cleaving to thee, and clogging thee, cry to him, *help Lord, ſet me free,* from my narrow heart, I ſtrive but in vain without thee, ſtill it continues ſo, I know little of thee, my affections are dead and cold towards thee, Lord I deſire to love thee, here is my heart, and leaſt it fly out, lay hold on it, and take thine own way with it, though it ſhould be in a painful way, yet draw it forth, yea draw it that it may run after thee. All is his own working, and all his motive is his

his own free Grace: Let who will fancy themſelves Maſters of their own hearts, and think to enlarge them by the ſtrength of their own ſtretches of ſpeculation; they alone, they alone are in the ſure and happy way of attaining it, that humbly ſuit and wait for this enlargement of heart from his hand that made it.

SERMON, XVI.

SERMON, XVI.

Rom. VIII. 33, 34.

Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that juſtifieth, &c.

OTher Men may fancy and boaſt as they pleaſe, but there are none in the World but the Godly alone, that are furniſht with ſufficiency, ſtrong ſupports and comforts againſt all poſſible hazards, and of theſe doth the Apoſtle treat moſt freely, ſweetly, and plentifully, in this Chapter. He ſecures Believers in their Chriſt, touching theſe two great evils. *After Condemnation*, and *preſent Affliction*, that the one cannot befal them, and the other cannot hurt them.

For their immunity from the former, they have the clear Word of the Goſpel, and the Seal of the Spirit; and that former Priviledg made ſure, as the far greater, doth ſecure the other as the leſſer.

They are freed from Condemnation, and not only ſo, but entitled and inſured to a Kingdom, and what hurt then can affliction do, yea it doth good, yea not only, it cannot

not rob them of their Crown, but it carries them on towards it, is their High way to it, *if we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo be glorified together.* Yea, all things to the Children of God do prove advantage; ſeverally taken, in their preſent ſenſe, they may ſeem evil, but taken jointly in their after iſſue, their working together are all for good. In their ſimple Nature poſſibly they are Poiſon, yet contempered and prepared, they ſhall prove Medicinal. *All theſe things are againſt me,* ſaid old *Jacob,* and yet he lived to ſee even all theſe were for him. The Children of God are indeed ſo happy, that the harſheſt things in their way change their nature, and become ſweet and profitable. This much by their Prayers, that have a Divine Incantation in them, they breath forth the expreſſions of that their Love to God, by which they are Character'd, *them that Love God.* And that is put on their hearts, the impreſſion of his Love to them, to which they are here led, by the Apoſtle, as to the Springhead of all; all their Comforts and Priviledges flow thence, yea, all their Love, and their Faith, appropriating thoſe Comforts and Priviledges. Yea, the very Treaſury of all together, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf is the free Gift of this free Love; he as the greateſt aſcertains all things beſides an unſpeakably leſs, *verſe* 32.

Theſe two are ſuch mighty Arguments, that no difficulty nor grief can ſtand before them

them. The Love of God. He is with us, who then againſt us? All the World it may be, but that all is nothing, once it was nothing, it was that God, that is our God that loves us, and is for us, that made it ſomething, and if he will, it may again be nothing; and as it is at its beſt, it is nothing being compared with another gift that he hath beſtowed on us, and having beſtowed that, ſure if there be any thing in this World can do us any good we ſhall not want it. *He that ſpared not his own Son, but gave him to the Death for us, will he not with him give us all things?*

And to cloſe all, he makes theſe two great Immunities good to us in Chriſt; he fixes there, we are freed from all fear of Condemnation, or of being hurt by Affliction. No Accuſation nor Guiltineſs can Annul the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and that is made ours; no Diſtreſs nor Suffering can cut us off from the Love of God; and if it cannot do that, we need not fear it, all other hazards are no hazard, that being ſure.

And in confidence of this, the Apoſtle gives the Defiance, caſts a Challenge to Angels, to Men, to all the World, upon theſe two points. Who ſhall *Accuſe?* Who ſhall *Separate?* Accuſe to God, or Separate from him. Whatſoever times may come, the hardeſt that any can apprehend, or foretel, if theſe two be not ſufficient furniture againſt them, I know not what is.

Men

Men are commonly buſied about other events concerning *them* and *theirs*, what ſhall become of *this* or the *other*, and what if this or that fall out, but the Conſcience once raiſed to this enquiry, the Soul being awake to diſcern the hazard of Eternal Death, all other fears and queſtions are drowned and loſt in this great Queſtion. Am I Condemned or not? Is my Sin Pardon'd or no?

And then a ſatisfying Anſwer received concerning this, all is quiet, the Soul repoſes ſweetly on God, and puts all its other concernments into his hands. Let him make me poor and deſpiſed, let him ſmite and chaſtiſe me, he hath forgiven my Sin, all is well. That burden taken off, the Soul can go light, yea, can leap and dance under all other burdens. Oh! how it feels it ſelf nimble, as a man eaſed of a load that he was even fainting under. Oh! Bleſſed is the man whoſe Sin is taken off, *lifted from his ſhoulders*, that's the word, *Pſal.* 32. 1. laid over upon Chriſt, who could bear the whole load, and take it away, take it out of ſight, which we could never have done, they'd have ſunk us for ever. That one word αἴρων, *Jo.* 1. ſignifies both, and anſwers to the two, *Iſai.* 53. *He hath born our grief, and carried our ſorrows*; lifted them away. Oh! how ſweet a burden, inſtead of this, is that ingagement of *Obedience* and *Love* to him, as our Redeemer, and that is all he lays on us; if we follow him, and bear his Croſs, he is our ſtrength,

and

and bears both it and us. So then this is the great point, the hearts eaſe to be Delivered from the Condemning weight of Sin.

And certainly, while men do not think thus, their hearts have very ſlight impreſſions of the truth of theſe things. I fear the moſt of us ſcarce believe this condemnation to come, at leaſt very ſhallowly, and ſo they cannot much conſider the deliverance from it provided to us in Jeſus Chriſt. I cannot ſee how 'tis poſſible for a heart perſwaded of theſe, to be very careful about any thing beſide; you that eat and drink, and labour, and trade, and beſtow all your time, either in the pains, or the pleaſures of this Earth, what think you of Eternity? Is it a light thing for you to periſh for ever? After a few days vainly ſpent, to fall under the Wrath of God for ever? Oh! that you would be perſwaded to think on theſe things.

And you that have an intereſt in this free and bleſſed eſtate, why are your Spirits ſo cold? So infrequent in the thoughts of it? Why are you not rejoicing in the Lord? Glading your ſelves in ſecret when you remember this? Go the World as it will, my Sin is forgiven me; miſtake me, accuſe me who ſo will, my God hath acquitted me in his Chriſt, and he loves me, and lives to intercede for me.

Methinks I hear ſome ſay, Ay, they that could

could ſay that might be merry indeed; but, alas! I have no ſuch aſſurance. *Who can lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect?* That's true, but here is the great point of ſo hard a reſolution, am I one of theſe?

That the Apoſtle doth thus ſpecifie the owners of this Conſolation, by this high and hidden Character of their Election, is not to render it doubtful and dark, for his main aim on the contrary is, both to extend it, as far as it can go, and to make it as clear as may be, to all that have intereſt in it, but he deſigns them by the Primitive Act of Love fixing on them, ſo as it is now manifeſted to them in the ſubſequent effects, that flow from the Elect called and ſanctified, and conformed to Jeſus Chriſt, both by his Spirit within them, and the Sufferings that without ariſe againſt them in the World; ſuch, as being *the Sons of God*, are *led by the Spirit of God*, and *walk not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit.*

And theſe things indeed conſidered as their Characters, the ſtamp of God on them, the impreſſions of their Election to life, do check the vain confidence of all Carnal Ungodly Profeſſors of the Name of Chriſt, and tell them that their pretended Title to him is a meer Deluſion; certainly, whoſoever lies in the love of Sin, and takes the Fleſh for his guide, that accurſed blind guide is leading him into the Pit. What groſs folly and impudence is it for any man, walking in the

Luſts of his own heart, to fancy and aver himſelf to be a Partner of that Redemption, whereof ſo great a part is to deliver us from the power of our Iniquities, to renew our hearts, and re-unite them to God, and poſſeſs them with his love.

The great Evidence of thy Election is Love. Thy love to him gives certain teſtimony of his precedeing Eternal Love to thee, ſo are they here deſigned, they *that love God*; thy chuſing him is the effect and evidence of his chuſing thee. Now this is not laborious, that needs to be diſputed amidſt all thy frailties; feel the pulſe of thine affection, which way beats it, and ask thy heart whether thou love him or not, in this thou haſt the Character of thy Election.

Know you not that the redeemed of Chriſt and he are one, they live one life, Chriſt lives in them, and if *any man hath not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*, as the Apoſtle declares in this Chapter. So then, this we are plainly to tell you, and conſider it; you that will not let go your Sins to lay hold on Chriſt, have as yet no ſhare in him.

But on the other ſide: The truth is, that when Souls are once ſet upon this ſearch, they commonly wind the Notion too high, and ſubtilize too much in the Diſpute, and ſo entangle and perplex themſelves, and drive themſelves further off from that comfort that they are ſeeking after; ſuch meaures

ſures and marks of Grace, they ſet to themſelves for their Rule and Standard, and unleſs they find thoſe without all Controverſie in themſelves, they will not believe that they have an intereſt in Chriſt, and this bleſſed and ſafe eſtate in him.

To ſuch I would only ſay, Are you in a willing league with any known ſin? Yea, would you willingly, if you might be ſaved in that way, give up your ſelf to Voluptuouſneſs and Ungodlineſs, and not at all deſire to follow Jeſus Chriſt in the way of Holineſs? Then truly, I have not any thing as yet to ſay for your Comfort, only there is a Salvation provided, and the door is yet open, and your heart may be changed. But on the other ſide, are the deſires of thy Soul after Chriſt, whole Chriſt, to be Righteouſneſs, and withal Sanctification to thee? Wouldſt thou willingly give up thy ſelf to be ruled by him, and have him thy King? Hadſt thou rather chuſe to ſuffer the greateſt Affliction for his ſake, to Honour him, than commit the leaſt Sin to diſpleaſe him? Doth thy Heart go out after him, when thou heareſt him ſpoke of? Doſt thou account him thy Treaſure, ſo that all the World ſounds but as an empty Shell to thee, when he is named? Says thy Soul within thee, Oh! that he were mine? And, oh! that I were his, that I could pleaſe him, and live to him? Then do not toſs thy Spirit, and jangle and ſpin

out thy thoughts in fruitleſs, endleſs doubtings, but cloſe with this as thy Portion, and be of good Comfort, thy ſins are, or will be forgiven thee.

I add yet further, if thou ſayeſt yet, that thou findeſt none of all this, yet I ſay there is warrant for thee, to believe and lay hold on this Righteouſneſs here held forth, to the end that thou mayeſt then find thoſe things in thee, and find comfort in them. Thou art convinc'd of Ungodlineſs, than believe on him that juſtifies the Ungodly, thou art Condemned, yet Chriſt is dead and riſen, fly to him as ſuch, as the Lamb ſlain, *he that was dead and is alive*, and then ſay, *who is he that Condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, or rather that is riſen. Who ſhall Accuſe?* 'Tis true they may clamour and make a noiſe, both Satan and thy Conſcience, but how can they faſten any Accuſation on thee? If they dare Accuſe, yet they cannot Condemn, when the Judg hath acquitted thee, and declared thee free, who is greater than all, and hath the abſolute power of the Sentence; all Charges, and Libels come too late after he hath once pronounc'd a Soul Righteous. And who ſhall Condemn, *it is Chriſt that died*, if the Sentence of the Law be brought forth? Yet here's the anſwer, It ought not to be twice ſatisfied; now once it is in Chriſt, he hath died, and that ſtands for the Believer. Whoſoever flies to him, and lays hold on him for life, he cannot die again; nor canſt thou die, for whom

whom he died once, or rather is riſen; that raiſes the aſſurance higher, and ſets it firmer, for this evidences that in his death all was payed, when he being the Surety, and ſeized on for the Debt, and once Deaths Priſoner, yet was ſet free. This clears the matter that there is no more to be ſaid, and yet further, in ſign that all is done, he is raiſed to the height of Honour above all Principalities and Powers, is ſet at the right hand of the Father, and there he ſits and lives to make Interceſſion, to ſue out the fulfilling of all for Believers, the bringing of them home, lives to ſee all made good that he Died and Covenanted for; ſo now his righteouſneſs is thine that believeſt, any challenge muſt meet with Chriſt firſt, and if it ſeize not on him, it cannot light on thee, for thou art in him, married to him. And the ſame triumph that he ſpeaks, *Iſaiah* 50. 8. whence theſe words are borrowed, that is made thine, and thou mayeſt now ſpeak it in him. I know not what can caſt him down that hath this word to reſt upon, and to comfort himſelf in.

SERMON XVII.

Rom. VIII. 35, &c.

Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? Shall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? &c.

IS this he that ſo lately cry'd out, *O wretched Man that I am! Who ſhall deliver me?* That now triumphs, O happy Man! *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt?*

Yes, 'tis the ſame. Pained then with the thoughts of that miſerable conjunction, with a Body of Death, and ſo crying out, who will deliver? Who will ſeparate me from that now? Now he hath found a Deliverer to do that for him, to whom he is for ever united, and he glories now in his inſeparable Union, and unalterable Love, that none can divide him from; yea, it is through him, that preſently after that word of complaint he praiſes God, and now in him he triumphs. So vaſt a difference is there betwixt a Chriſtian taken in himſelf, and in Chriſt, when he views himſelf in himſelf, then nothing but wretched,

and

and wretched, a polluted periſhing Wretch; but then he looks again, and ſees himſelf in Chriſt, and there he's rich, and ſafe, and happy, he triumphs, and he glories in it above all the painted Proſperities, and againſt all the horrid Adverſities of the World, he lives in his Chriſt content and happy, and laughs at all Enemies.

And he extends his triumph, he makes a common good of it to all Believers, ſpeaks it in their name, *who ſhall ſeparate us*, and would have them partake of the ſame confidence, and ſpeak in the ſame ſtile with him: It is vain that men fancy theſe to be expreſſions of Revelations, or ſome ſingularly priviledg'd Aſſurances, then they would not ſuit their end, which is clearly and undoubtedly the encouragement of all the Children of God, upon grounds that are peculiar to them from all the reſt of the World, but common to them all, in all Ages, and all varieties of condition.

It is true, all of them have not a like clear and firm apprehenſion of their happy and ſure eſtate, and ſcarce any of them are alike at all times, yet they have all and always the ſame right to this eſtate, and to the comfort of it, and when they ſtand in a right light to view it, they do ſee it ſo, and rejoice in it.

There be indeed ſome kind of aſſurances that are more rare and extraordinary, ſome immediate glances, or coruſcations of the love

of God upon the Soul of a Believer; a ſmile of his Countenance, and this doth exceedingly refreſh, yea, raviſh the Soul, and enables it mightily for Duties and Sufferings. Theſe he diſpenſes arbitrarily and freely where and when he will; ſome weaker Chriſtians ſometimes have them, while ſtronger are ſtrangers to them, the Lord training them to live more contentedly by Faith till the day of Viſion come.

And that is the other, the leſs extatical, but the more conſtant and fixed kind of aſſurance, the proper aſſurance of Faith, the Soul by believing cleaves unto God in Chriſt as he offers himſelf in the Goſpel, and thence is poſſeſt with a ſweet and calm perſwaſion of his love, that being the proper work to appropriate him, to make Chriſt, and in him Eternal Life, ours; ſo 'tis the proper reſult and fruit of that its acting, eſpecially when it acts any thing ſtrongly to quiet the Soul in him. Then *being Juſtified by Faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and from that Peace, Joy; yea, even glorying in Tribulation, as there follows. And theſe ſpringing not from an extraordinary ſenſe or view, but from the very innate Vertue of Faith working kindly, and according to its own Nature.

Therefore many Chriſtians do prejudice their own Comfort, and darken their Spirits, by not giving freedom to Faith, to act according to its Nature and proper Principles; they will not believe till they find ſome evi-

dence,

dence, or aſſurance, which is quite to invert the order of the thing, and to look for Fruit without ſettling a Root for it to grow from.

Would you take Chriſt upon the abſolute word of promiſe tendring him to you, and reſt on him, ſo this would ingraft you into life it ſelf, for that he is, and ſo thoſe Fruits of the Holy Ghoſt would bud and flouriſh in your hearts; from that very believing on him, would ariſe this perſwaſion, yea, even to a gloriation, and an humble boaſting in his love, *who ſhall accuſe*, who *ſhall condemn*, who *ſhall ſeparate*.

The undivided Companion, and undoubted Helper and Preſerver of this confidence of Faith, is an *active love* to Chriſt, a conſtant ſtudy of Holineſs, and ſtrife againſt Sin, which is the grand enemy of Faith, that obſtructs the very Vital Spirits of Faith, that makes it ſickly and heavy in its actings, and cauſes the Palſie in the hand of Faith, that it cannot lay ſo faſt hold. Therefore this you would be careful of, yea, know that of neceſſity it attends Faith, and as Faith grows, Holineſs will grow, and Holineſs growing will mutually ſtrengthen and eſtabliſh Faith; the Comforts of the Holy Ghoſt are holy purifying Comforts, and the more the Soul is purify'd, and made holy, the more is it cleared and enlarged, to receive much of theſe Comforts. *Bleſſed are the pure heart, they ſhall ſee God*; Unholineſs is as damps and filthy miſts in the Soul, it darkens all.

Hence

Hence it is evident in what way Chriſtians may and ought to aſpire to this Aſſurance, it is their Portion, and in this way they are to aſpire to it, and ſhall find it, if not preſently, yet let them wait and go on in this way, they ſhall not miſcarry.

Again it appears, that this aſſurance is no enemy to Holy Diligence, nor friend of Carnal Security; on the contrary, it is the only thing that doth eminently ennoble and embolden the Soul for all adventures and ſervices. Baſe fears and doubtings, wherein ſome place much of Religion, and many weak Chriſtians ſeem to be in that miſtake, to think it a kind of holy ſpiritual temper to be queſtioning and doubting. I ſay, theſe baſe fears can never produce any thing truly generous, no height of obedience, they do nothing but entangle and diſable the Soul for every good work, *perfect love caſts out this fear*, and works a ſweet unperplexing fear, a holy warineſs not to offend, which fears nothing elſe. And this confidence of Love is the great ſecret of Comfort, and of Ability to do God ſervice. Nothing makes ſo ſtrong and healthful a Conſtitution of Soul as pure Love, it dares ſubmit to God, and reſign it ſelf to him, it dare venture it ſelf in his hand, and truſt his word, and ſeeks no more but how to pleaſe him. A heart thus compoſed, goes readily and chearfully unto all ſervices, to do, to ſuffer, to live, to die, at his pleaſure, and firmly ſtands to this, that nothing can ſeparate it from

from that which is ſufficient to it, which is all its happineſs, the love of God in Chriſt Jeſus.

That is indeed his love to us, but ſo as it includes inſeparably the inſeparableneſs of our love to him; for obſerve the things ſpecify'd as moſt likely, if any thing, to ſeparate us; Shall *tribulation*, *diſtreſs*, &c. Now theſe eſpecially, being endured for his ſake, cannot immediately have any likely Viſage of altering his love to us, but rather confirm us in it; but theſe ſhall not ſeparate us neither, by altering our love to him, by driving us from him, and carrying us into any way of defection, or denial of his Name, and ſo cut us off from our union with him, and intereſt in his love; and that is the way wherein the weak Chriſtian will moſt apprehend the hazard of Separation. Now the Apoſtle ſpeaks his own ſenſe, and would raiſe in his Brethren the ſame confidence as to that danger.

No fear; not one of theſe things ſhall be able to carry us away; theſe mighty Waves ſhall not unſettle our Faith, nor quench the flame of our Love, we ſhall be Victors and more, in all, but how? *Through him that hath loved us.*

This his love makes ſure ours, he hath ſuch hold of our hearts as he will not let go, nor ſuffer us to let go our hold; all is faſt by his ſtrength. He will not loſe us, nor ſhall any be able to pluck us out of his hand.

Jeſus Chriſt is the Medium of this love, the middle

middle link that keeps all safe together betwixt God and Man, so close united in his personal Nature, and the persons of men in and by him, to the Father. So here it is first called the love of Christ, and then in the close, the love of God in Christ, the Soul first carry'd to him as neareſt, but so carry'd by him into that Primitive Love of God that flows in Christ, and that gave even Christ to us as before. And this is the bottom truth, the firm ground of the Saints perseverance, which men not taking aright, must needs question the matter, yea, may put it out of question upon their suppositions; for if our own purposes and strength were all we had to relie on, alas! how soon were we shaken.

So the love of God in Christ is not only here mentioned as the point of happiness from which we cannot be removed, but as the principle of firmness that makes it self sure of us, and us of it, and will not part with us.

Now it is no pride in a Christian, but the trueſt humility to triumph and glory in this. This is it that makes all sure; this is the great comfort, and the victory of the Saints.

He that loved us, and bought us so dear, will not lightly slip from us, yea, upon no terms will he let us go, unless some stronger than he is, meet with him, and by force bereave him of us; which we know is impossible. He and his Father, who are one in themselves, and in their strength, and one in this love, are

are greater and ſtronger than all; and he that once overcame for us, always overcomes in us.

Thus he lets tentations and tribulations aſſault us, and this neither unargues his love, nor endangers his right to us; yea, it doth but give proof and evidence of the Invincible firmneſs of both. He ſuffers others to lie ſoft, and ſit warm, and pamper their fleſh at leiſure, but he hath nobler buſineſs for his Champions, his Worthies, and moſt of all for the ſtouteſt of them, he calls them forth to honourable Services, to the hardeſt Encounters he ſets them on, one to fight with Sickneſs, another with Poverty, another with Reproaches, and Perſecutions, with Priſons, and Irons, and with Death it ſelf; and all this while, loves he the leſs, or they him? Oh! No, he looks on and rejoices to ſee them do Valiantly, 'tis the Joy of his heart, no ſight on Earth ſo ſweet to him; and 'tis all the while by his ſubduing, and in his ſtrength, that they hold out in the Conflict, and obtain the Conqueſt.

And thus they are the more endeared to him by theſe Services, and theſe Adventures of love for him, and he ſtill likewiſe is the more endeared to them; certainly the more any one ſuffers for Chriſt, the more he loves Chriſt, as love doth grow and engage it ſelf by all it does and ſuffers, and burns hotter by what it encounters and overcomes, as by fewel added to it, as to Jeſus Chriſt by what he

ſuffered

ſuffered for us we are the dearer to him, ſo he is to us by all we ſuffer for his ſake.

Love grows moſt by oppoſition from others whoſoever, when it is ſure of acceptance, and the correſpondence of mutual love in the party loved. Above all this heavenly Divine Love is ſtrong as Death, a vehement flame, a flame of God indeed, as the word is, and *many waters cannot quench it*, not all theſe that here follow one another, *Tribulation*, *Diſtreſs*, *Perſecution*, *Famine*, *Nakedneſs*, *Peril*, *Sword*, yea, in the midſt of theſe, I ſay, it grows; the Soul cleaves cloſer to Chriſt, the more attempts are made to remove it from him, *though killed all the day long*. (This paſſage from the *Pſalm*, is moſt fit both to teſtifie, that Perſecution is not unuſually the lot of the Saints, and to give inſtance of their firm adherence to God in all troubles, as the Church there profeſſeth, and if the Saints in that diſpenſation could reckon in ſuch a manner, much more ought Chriſtians, upon a clearer diſcovery of the Covenant of Grace, and their union with God in Chriſt.) The Saints are as in a common Butchery in the World, yet not only as Sheep for the Slaughter, but ſometimes as Sheep for the Altar, men thinking it as Sacrifice. They *that kill you* (ſays our Saviour) *ſhall think they do God ſervice*; yet even this pulls not from him, they part with life; Ay, why not, this life is but a death, and he is our life for whom we loſe it.

All

All theſe do but increaſe the victories and triumphs of Love, and make it more glorious; as they tell of her multiplying labours to that Champion they are not only Conquerors, but more than Conquerors, by multiply'd Victories, and they gain in them all both more honour, and more ſtrength; they are the fitter for new adventures, and ſo more than ſimple Conquerors: We overcome, and are ſure not to loſe former Conqueſts, but to add more, and Conquer on to the end, which other Conquerors are not ſure of; oftentimes they out-live their own Succeſſes and Renown, and loſe on a ſudden what they have been gaining a whole life time; not ſo here. We are ſecured in the Author of our Victories, 'tis through him that hath loved us, and he cannot grow leſs, yea, ſhall ſtill grow greater, till all his Enemies be made his Footſtool.

Having given the Challenge, and finding none to anſwer, and that all, the moſt apparent, are in a moſt Rhetorical Accumulation ſilenced; *Tribulation, Diſtreſs, Perſecution, Famine, Nakedneſs, Peril, Sword*, &c. He goes on confidently in the triumph, and avers his aſſurance of full and final Victory againſt all imaginable power of all the Creatures, neither Death nor Life, nor the fear of the moſt terrible Death; nor the hope, or love of the moſt deſirable life: And in the height of this Courage and Confidence, he ſuppoſes impoſſible Enemies, *Angels, Principalities*, &c. unleſs

leſs you take it of the Angels of Darkneſs only, but if it could be poſſible that the other ſhould offer at ſuch a thing, they would be too weak for it. No ſenſe of any preſent things, or apprehenſions of things to come, not any thing within the vaſt circle of the World above or below, nor any Creature can do it. Here Sin is not ſpecify'd, becauſe he is ſpeaking of outward oppoſitions and difficulties expreſsly, and becauſe that is removed by the former challenge, *Who ſhall accuſe?* That aſſerting a free and final acquittance of all ſin, a pardon of the curſe, which yet will never encourage any of theſe to ſin, that live in the aſſurance of this love. Oh! no, and theſe general words do include it too, *Nothing preſent nor to come*, &c. So it is carried clear, and is the ſatisfying comfort of all that Jeſus Chriſt hath drawn after him, and united in his love.

'Tis enough, whatſoever they may be ſeparated from, the things or perſons deareſt in this World, 'tis no matter, the Jewel is ſafe, none can take my Chriſt from me; and I ſafe in him, as his purchaſe, none can take me from him. And being ſtill in his love, and through him in the Fathers love, that is ſufficient. What can I fear? What can I want? All other hazards ſignifie nothing; how little value are they of? And for how little a while am I in danger of them? Methinks all ſhould look on a Believer with an emulous eye, and wiſh his eſtate more than a Kings.

Alas!

Alas! poor Creatures, rich men, great men, Princes and Kings; what vain things are they that you embrace and cleave to, whatſoever they be, ſoon muſt you part; can you ſay of any of them, who ſhall ſeparate us? Storms may ariſe, and ſcatter Ships that Sail fairly together in fair weather; thou mayeſt be removed, by publick Commotions and Calamities, from thy ſweet Dwellings, and Societies, and Eſtates, *&c.* You may even live to ſee, and ſeek your parting. At laſt you muſt part, for you muſt die; then farewel Parks and Palaces, Gardens and Honours, and even Crowns themſelves: then deareſt Friends, Children, and Wife, muſt be parted with. And what haſt thou left, poor Soul, that haſt not Chriſt, but that which thou wouldſt gladly part with and canſt not. The condemning guilt of all thy Sins?

Linquenda tellus & domus & placeus uxor, &c.

But the Soul that is in Chriſt, when other things are pull'd away, he feels little or nothing, he cleaves to Chriſt, and theſe ſeparations pain him not. Yea, when that great Separatiſt, Death, comes, that breaks all other unions, even that of the Soul and Body, yet ſo far is it from ſeparating the Believers Soul from its Beloved Lord Jeſus, that on the contrary, it carries it into the neareſt union with him, and fulleſt enjoyment of him for ever.

SERMON, XVIII.

Isaiah LIX. 1, 2.

Behold, the Lords hand is not shortned that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear,

But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

OUR vain minds are naturally fruitful in nothing more than in mistakes of God; for the most part we think not on him, and when we do it, we fancy him according to our own affections, which are wholly perverse and crooked.

Men commonly judg it a vain thing to spend much pains and time in Worshipping him, and if they are convinc'd in this, and tied to it by the profession of his Name, then they think all Religion is a Shell of external diligences and observances, and count it strange if this be not accepted. In the former Chapter we find this, in the Prophets contest with the people, about their Fasting, and their opinion of it; he cuts up their Sacrifices, and lets them see what was within, the skin was sound

ſound and look'd well, but being opened, the entrails were found rotten. And here he enters into another conteſt, againſt the Latent Atheiſm of their hearts; who after their manner of ſeeking God, not finding him, and not being delivered, are ready to think that he either cannot, or will not help, and rather reſt on that groſs miſtake, than enquire into themſelves for the true cauſe of their continuing Calamities; they incline rather to think 'tis ſome Indiſpoſition in God to help, than what it truly is, a want of Reformation in themſelves that hinder it. It is not likely that they would ſay thus, not ſpeak it out in plain terms, no, nor poſſibly not ſpeak it formally and diſtinctly within, not ſo much as in their thoughts, and yet they might have a confus'd dark conceit of this. And much of the Atheiſm of mans heart is of this faſhion, not formed into reſolv'd Propoſitions, but Latent *, in confus'd Notions of it, ſcarce diſcernable by himſelf, at leaſt, not ſearch'd out and diſcerned in his own Breaſt; there they are, and he ſees them not. Not written aſſertions, but flying fumes, filling the Soul, and hindering it to read the Characters of God that are writ upon the Conſcience.

* Ezek. 8. *Behind the Wall.*

Impenitency of men, in any condition, and particularly under diſtreſs, is from the want of clear apprehenſions, and deep perſwaſions of God, of his Juſt Anger provok'd by their Sin, and of his ſweetneſs and readineſs to forgive, and embrace a returning Sinner, his

Soveraign power, able to rid them out of the greateſt trouble, his Ear quick enough to hear the cries, yea, the leaſt whiſpering of a humbled heart in the loweſt deep of his ſorrow, and his Arm long enough to reach them, and ſtrong enough to draw them forth. *He that comes unto God muſt believe that he is,* ſays the Apoſtle. So certainly, he that believes that, muſt come; it will ſweetly conſtrain him, he cannot but come that is ſo perſwaded. Were mens hearts much impreſt with that belief in all their troubles, they would eye men leſs, and God more, and without delay they would faſten upon the Churches reſolution, *Hoſea* 6. 1. *Come and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up,* &c. And this is the very thing that the Prophet would here perſwade to by this preſent Doctrin; and having impleaded them guilty, he ſets them a Copy of humble Confeſſion, *ver.* 12. *&c.* Hence the frequent complaints in the *Pſalm, Why hideſt thou thy ſelf?* So *Pſal.* 22. 2. *I cry,* but *no hearing.*

In the words of theſe two Verſes, theſe two things appear: *A ſad condition,* and the *true cauſe of it.*

The *condition,* I think, I have reaſon to call ſad; 'tis God hiding his face that he will not hear. This may be the perſonal eſtate of his Children, or the publick eſtate of his Church. From a Soul he hides his face, not ſo much in the withdrawing of ſenſible Comforts,

ſort, and ſweet taſtes of Joy, which to many are ſcarce known, and to ſuch as do know them, commonly do not continue very long, but it is *a ſuſpenſion of that lively influence of his Divine power, for raiſing the mind to the Contemplation of him, and Communion with him in Prayer and Meditation*, which yet may be, were thoſe reliſhes and ſenſes of Joy are not, and the returns of it appear in beating down the power of Sin, or abating and ſubduing it, making the heart more pure and heavenly, more to live by Faith in Chriſt, to be often at the Throne of Grace, and to receive gracious anſwers, ſupplies of wants, and aſſiſtances againſt tentations. Now when there is a ceſſation and obſtruction of theſe, and ſuch like workings, the face of God is hid, the Soul is at a loſs, ſeeks ſtill and cannot find him whom it loveth. And in this condition, it cannot take comfort in other things, they are too low, 'tis a higher and nobler deſire than to be ſatisfy'd, or diverted, with the Childiſh things, that even men delight in, that know not God, 'tis a Love ſickneſs which nothing can cure, but the preſence and love of the party loved; yea, nothing can ſo much as allay the pain, and give an interval of eaſe, or recover a fainting Fit, but ſome good word or look, or at leaſt ſome kind meſſage from him. Set thee in a Palace, and all delights about thee, and a Crown on thy Head, yet if his love has ceas'd on thy heart, theſe are all nothing without him. It was after *David*

was advanc'd to his Kingdom, *Pſal.* 30. And is in the *Pſalm* of the Dedication of his Royal Houſe, that he ſaid, *Thou hidſt thy face, and I was troubled.* All is dark, all the ſhining Marble, and the Gold, and Azure, loſe their luſtre, when thou art not here dwelling with me.

And thus for the Church, God is the proper light, the beauty, the life of it, deck it with all this Worlds ſplendour, with all the dreſſes of pompous Worſhip, theſe are not its genuine beauty, and they provoke him, who is its ornament, (as is *Jer.* 2. 32.) to depart; but give it the native purity and beauty of holy Miniſters, and Ordinances well regulated, yet even that is but a dead comelineſs, proportion, and feature, without life, when God is abſent.

And for matter of deliverances and working for her, which is here the thing in hand, none can do any thing in that, not the wiſeſt, nor the beſt of men, with all their combined Wit and Strength, when he retires and comes not forth, doth not ſhew himſelf on the behalf of his people, and work their works for them.

Theſe have, it may be, ſome kind of Prayer poſſibly, they offer at extraordinaries, and yet obtain nothing, are not heard, the ſadeſt note in all the Song of *Lament.* 3. 43, 44. *Thou haſt covered with anger, and perſecuted us; thou haſt ſlain, thou haſt not pitied. Thou haſt covered thy ſelf with a Cloud, that our Prayer ſhould*

ſhould not paſs through. Still, while that Door ſtands open, there is hope and remedy for other evils, but that being ſhut, what can a People, or a Soul expect, but growing troubles, one ſorrow upon the back of another; yea, that is the great trouble, the hiding of his face, and refuſing to hear. Obſerve *Job* 34. 29. *When he giveth peace, who then can make trouble?* Now the other in the ſame terms would have been, *when he makes trouble who can give peace?* But inſtead, 'tis, *when he hides his face who then can behold him?* No peace but in beholding him; and nothing but trouble, that is the grand trouble, when he hides his face, and it is expreſs'd, in both caſes, whether it be Perſonal or National, whether againſt a Nation or a man only.

This is the thing wherein the ſtrength of other troubles lie, that gives them weight, when they impart and ſignifie thus much, that the face of God is hid from a Soul or a People. We ought to enquire if this be not our condition at this time, hath he not hid his face from us? Are we not left in the dark, that we know not which way to turn us? Either we muſt ſit ſtill and do nothing, for if we ſtir we do but ruſh one upon another, as in darkneſs, conteſting each to have the way, and yet when we have it given us, we know not well which way to go. And we think to be cleared, but it fails us, as in this Chapter, *ver.* 9. *We wait for light but behold obſcurity, for brightneſs, but we walk in darkneſs, we*

grope for the Wall as blind, and ſtumble at Noon day as in the Night, our Counſels ſtrangely darkened, and no right underſtanding one of another. By all debates little or no clearing of things attained, but our paſſions are more enflamed, and parties are further off, the light or ſound Judgment gone, and with it the heat of Love, inſtead of which that miſerable Infernal heat, heat without light, mutual hatreds and revilings, both ſides (verbally at leaſt) agreeing in the general terms both of their deſires and deſigns, and yet falling out about modes and faſhions of them. And to ſay no more of Parties, the Enemies of Religion on both hands, right and left, in action and in power, and only thoſe that love that, we conceive is the way of truth, ſtanding as a naked prey to whether of the two ſhall prevail. Deſires and Prayers we have preſented, and ſee as yet no appearance of an iſſue, but further confuſions, even faſting to ſtrife and debate. And where are there any that look like perſons to ſtand in the gap, lifting up holy hands, without wrath or doubting? Hearts are ſtill as unhumbled, and lives as unreformed as ever, new inteſtine troubles are moſt likely to ariſe, few or none laying it to heart, and with calm lowly Spirits mourning before God for it, Ephraim *againſt* Manaſſeth, *and* Manaſſeth *againſt* Ephraim, *and they both againſt* Judah, *and for all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill.*

But

But generally men ought to be leſs in deſcanting one on another, and more in ſearching and enquiring each into himſelf, even where it may ſeem Zeal, yet Nature and Paſſion may more eaſily let in the other, but this Self-ſearch and Self-cenſure, is an uneaſie task, the moſt unpleaſant of all things to our Carnal Self-loving hearts; but the heavy hand of God ſhall never turn from us, nor his gracious face turn towards us, till there is more of this amongſt us. Moſt ſay their Prayers, and as they are little worth, they look little after them, enquire not what becomes of them. But *M. B.* would we continue to call, and find favourable anſwers, we muſt be more within, the heart made a Temple to God, wherein Sacrifices do aſcend, but that they may be accepted, it muſt be purged of Idols, nothing left in any corner, though never ſo ſecret, to ſtir the Jealouſie of our God, who ſees through all. O happy that heart, that is as *Jacob*'s Houſe purg'd, in which no more Idols are to be found, but the holy God dwelling there alone as in his holy Temple.

Behold, the Lords hand is not ſhortned, &c.] Much of all knowledg lies in the knowledg of cauſes, and in practical things much of the right ordering them depends on it; the true cauſe of a diſeaſe found out is half the cure. Here we have the miſeries of an afflicted people reduced to their real cauſe; that which is not the cauſe is firſt removed. *Behold the Lords hand is not ſhortned,* &c.

We

We are not only to be untaught this errour that we think not ſo, but to be taught to believe and think on that truth, that God is ſtill the ſame in Power and Goodneſs, to keep up the notion of it in our hearts, ſo we may call in paſt experiences, and relations of Gods former workings for his people, and that with much uſe and comfort. He that brought forth his people out of *Egypt* with an outſtretched arm, as ſtill they are reminded of that Deliverance by the Prophets, and called to look on it, as the great inſtance and pledge of their reſtorement by the ſame hand, can again deliver his people when at the loweſt, *Iſai.* 50. 2. where the like words to theſe.

And in this belief we ſhall not faint in the time of deep diſtreſs, our own, or the Churches; knowing the unalterable, invincible, infinite power of our God, that all the ſtrength of all enemies is nothing, and leſs than nothing to his, their devices knots of ſtraw. What is it that is to be done for his Church, if her and his glory be intereſted in it? There remains no queſtion in point of difficulty, that hath no place with him. The more difficult, yea impoſſible for us, or any humane ſtrength, the more fit work for him; *becauſe it is hard for you, ſhall it alſo be hard for me? ſaith the* Lord in the Prophet. And where *Jeremy* uſes that argument in Prayer, he hath his anſwer returned in the ſame words, as the Eccho to the Prayer, reſounding from Heaven, *Jer.* 32, 17, 27. and that in relation to the great reduction

reduction of the *Jews* from *Babylon*, as is expreſsly promis'd, *ver.* 36, 37, *&c.* And there the Prophet gives that firſt great example of Divine power, the forming of the World, *ver.* 17. *Behold thou haſt made the heaven and the earth by thy great power.*

Men think 'tis an eaſie common belief, and that none doubt of the Omnipotency of God. But oh! the undaunted confidence it would give to the heart, being indeed firmly believ'd, and wiſely uſed and applied to particular exigencies. Men either doubt, or which upon the matter, for the uſe of it is all one, they forget who the Lord is, when their hearts miſgive them, becauſe of the Churches weakneſs, and the Enemies power. What is that upon the matter? Remember whoſe is the Church, Gods, and what his power is, and then ſee if thou canſt find any cauſe of fear, *Iſai.* 41. 14. *Fear not, thou Worm* Jacob, and ye *men few*, or *weak men of* Iſrael. So the word is, *I will help thee*, ſaith the Lord, *and thy Redeemer, the holy one of* Iſrael. So *Iſai.* 51. 12. *I, even I am he, that comforteth you*, (there is the ſtrength of it) *who art thou, that thou ſhouldeſt be afraid of a man that ſhall die, and of the Son of man, which ſhall be made as graſs?* And *forgetteſt*, ver. 13. *the Lord thy Maker that ſtretched forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the Earth*, &c. Do but think aright on him, and then ſee if it be *poſſible* for thee to fear. All thy little doubts and deſpondencies of mind will fly and vaniſh

vaniſh away before one clear thought of thy God. Though the World were turning upſide down, it ſhall go well with them that fear him.

And as this apprehenſion of God ſtrengthens Faith, ſo it quickens Prayer, it ſtirs thee up to ſeek to him for help, when thou knoweſt and remembreſt that there it is; there is help in him, power enough, and no want of readineſs and good will neither, if we apply our ſelves to ſeek him aright, his hand is as ſtrong to ſave, and his ear as quick to hear as ever, and in this that his ear is not heavy, is both ſignify'd his ſpeedy and certain knowledg of all Requeſts ſent up to him, and his gracious Inclination to receive them. Now theſe perſwaſions do undoubtedly draw up the heart towards him.

Again, as they ſtrengthen Faith and quicken Prayer, they teach us Repentance, direct us inward to Self-examination, to the ſearching, and finding out, and purging out of ſin. When Deliverance is delayed, for we are ſure it ſtops not upon either of theſe on Gods part, either ſhortneſs of his hand, or dulneſs of his ear. Whence is it then? Certainly it muſt be ſomewhat on our ſide that works againſt us, and prejudices our deſires. So here, thus you ſee the clear aim of it, *Behold the Lords hand is not ſhortned that it cannot ſave, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear*: What is it then that hinders? Oh! it is this, out of all doubt, *Your Iniquities ſeparate.*

Old

Old ſins unrepented of, and new ſins ſtill added, as all unrepentant Sinners do; now this ſeparates between you and God, for he is a Holy God, a Juſt God, hates Inity, and *between you and your God*, that pleads no connivance at your ſins, but rather nearer inſpection, and ſharper puniſhment, *he will be ſanctified in theſe that are near him*, in them eſpecially; their ſin is greatned much by that relation, *your God*, to ſin againſt him ſo groſsly, ſo continuedly, with ſo high a hand, and ſo impenitent hearts, not reclaim'd by all his mercies, by the remembrance of his Covenant made with you, and mercies beſtowed on you, nor by the fear of his Judgments threatned, nor by the feeling of them inflicted, no returning nor relenting, not of his own people to their God. Sure, you muſt be yet more puniſht. *You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore will I puniſh you for all your Iniquities.* I let others eſcape with many things that I cannot paſs in you; you faſt and pray it may be, you howl and keep a noiſe, but you amend nothing, forſake not one ſin, for all your ſufferings, and for all your moanings and cries; you would be delivered, but do not part with one of your Luſts, or wicked Cuſtoms, even for a Deliverance, and ſo the quarrel remains ſtill.

'Tis that that ſeparates, is as a huge Wall betwixt us, betwixt me and your Prayers, and betwixt you and my helping hand, and though

though I do hear and could help, yet I will not till this Wall be down; you ſhall not ſee me, nor find by any gracious *ſign* that I hear you. This hides his face that he will not hear.

This way God hath eſtabliſh'd in his ordinary methods with his people, though ſometimes he uſes his own priviledg, yet uſually he links *Sin* and *Calamity* together, and *Repentance* and *Deliverance* together.

Sin ſeparates and hides his face, not only from a People that profeſſes his Name, but even from a Soul that really bears his Name ſtampt upon it: Though it cannot fully, and for ever cut off ſuch a Soul, yet in part, and for a time it may, yea to be ſure, it will ſeparate, and hide the face of God from them. Their daily inevitable frailties do not this, but either a courſe of careleſs walking, and many little unlawful liberties taken to themſelves, that will riſe and gather as a Cloud, and hide the face of God. Or ſome one groſs ſin, eſpecially if often reiterated, will prove as a firm Stone Wall, or rather as a Brazen Wall, built up by their own hands betwixt them and Heaven, and will not be ſo eaſily diſſolved or broke down; and yet till that be, the light of his Countenance, who is the life of the Soul, will be eclipſed, and withheld from it.

And this conſider'd, (beſides that Law of Love that will forbid ſo foul Ingratitude, yet I ſay, this conſider'd, even our own intereſt) will

will make us wary to ſin, though we were ſure not to be yet altogether ſeparated from the love of God by it; yet if thou that haſt any perſwaſion of that love, dareſt thou venture upon any known ſin? Thou art not hazardleſs and free from all damage by it, if thou haſt need of that argument to reſtrain thee, then before thou run upon't, ſit down and reckon the expence, ſee what it will coſt thee if thou do commit it, thou knoweſt that once it coſt the heart blood of thy Redeemer to expiate it, and is it a light matter to thee; and though that paid all that ſcore, nothing thou canſt ſuffer being able to do any thing that way, yet as an unavoidable preſent fruit of it, it will draw on this damage. Thou ſhalt be ſure for a time, it may be for a long time, poſſibly moſt of thy time, near all thy days it may darken much that love of God to thee, which if thou doeſt but eſteem of, think on it, it changes not in him, but a ſad change will Sin bring on thee, as to thy ſight and apprehenſion of it; many a ſweet hour of bleſt communion with thy God ſhalt thou miſs, and either be dead, and ſtupid in that want, and mourn after him, and yet find thy ſelf, and ſighs, and tears hold out, the Door ſhut, yea, a dead Wall rais'd betwixt thee and him, and at beſt much ſtraightning and pains to take it down again; contrary to other Walls and Buildings, that are far more eaſily pull'd down than built up, but this a great deal eaſier built up than pull'd down.

True,

True, thy God could caſt it down with a Word, and 'tis his free Grace that muſt do't otherwiſe, thou couldſt never remove it, yet will he have thee feel thy own handy work, and know thy folly. Thou muſt be at pains to dig at it, and may be coſt thee broken Bones in taking it down, pieces of it falling heavy and ſad upon thy Conſcience, and cruſhing thee, as *David* cry'd out at that work, *Pſal.* 51. for a healing Word from a God, *Make me to hear joy and gladneſs, that the bones which thou haſt broken may rejoyce*; it will force thee to ſay, O fool that I was, what meant I? Oh! it is good keeping near God, and raiſing no diviſions. What are Sins? Falſe delights, but make ado, and have ado, a man to provide his own vexation. Now this diſtance from God, and all this turmoiling, and breaking, and crying e're he appear again, conſider if any pleaſure of ſin can countervail this damage, ſure when thou art not out of thy Wits, thou wilt never make ſuch a bargain for all the pleaſure thou muſt make out of any ſin, to breed thy ſelf all this pains, and all this grief, at once, to diſpleaſe thy God, and diſpleaſe thy ſelf, and make a partition between him and thee. Oh! ſweet and ſafe ways of Holineſs, walking with God in his company and favour; he *that orders his Converſation aright, he ſees the loving kindneſs of the Lord*, 'tis ſhewn to him, he lives in the ſight of it.

But if any ſuch ſeparation is made, yet is it

it thy great desire to have it removed; why? there is hope. See to it, labour to break down, and pray to him to help thee, and he will put to his hand, and then it must fall, and in all thy sense of separation, look to him that *brake down the middle wall*, Eph. 2. There it is spoken of, as betwixt men, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, but so as it was also between the *Gentiles*, and God separated from his people, and from himself, *ver.* 16. to *reconcile both to God in one Body*. And *ver.* 18. *Through him we have access by one Spirit to the Father.* And then he adds, that they were *no more strangers and foreigners*, dwelling on the other side of the Wall, παροικοι as the Word is, *but fellow Citizens*, &c.

Oh! that we knew more what it were to live in this sweet Society, in undivided Fellowship with God. Alas! how little is understood this living in him, separated from Sin, and this World, which otherwise do separate from him; solacing our hearts in his love, and despising the base muddy delights that the World admires, hoping for that new *Jerusalem*, where none of these Walls of Sin, nor any one Stone of them are, and for that bright day wherein there is no Cloud nor Mist, to hid our Sun from us.

Now for the condition of the Church Know this to be the great obstructer of its peace, making him to withdraw his hand, and hide his face, and to turn away his ear from our Prayers, and loath our Fasts, *Isai.* 1.

15. *Jer.* 14. 12. The quarrel ſtands, ſin not repented and removed, the Wall is ſtill ſtanding, Oaths, and Sabbath breaking, and Pride, and Oppreſſion, and Heart burnings ſtill remaining. Oh! what a noiſe of Religion and Reformation, all ſides are for the Name of it, and how little of the thing? The Goſpel it ſelf is deſpiſed, grown ſtale as trivial Doctrine. Oh! my Beloved, if I could ſpeak many hours, without intermiſſion, all my cry would be, Repent and pray. *Let us ſearch and try our ways, and turn unto the Lord our God.* Oh! what Walls of every ones Sin are ſet to't! Dig diligently to bring down thine own, and for theſe huge Walls of publick National guiltineſſes; if thou canſt do nothing to them more, compaſs them about as *Jericho*, and look up to Heaven for their downfal. Cry, Lord, theſe we our ſelves have reared, but without thee who can bring them down? Lord, throw them down for us, a touch of thy hand, a Word of thy mouth, will make them fall. Were we leſs buſied in impertinencies, and more in this moſt needful work, it might do ſome good; who knows but the Lord might make his own way clear, and return and viſit us, and make his face to ſhine that we might be ſaved.

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